



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

March 2020

SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

This month, Library staff shifted focus to digital resources for customers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and temporary shutdown of Library locations.

Due to COVID-19 exposure risk, library buildings closed to the public on March 17 with all programs and room rentals cancelled for the final two weeks of the month. After a stay at home order was issued the following week, all paraprofessional and clerical employees were placed on furlough. Exempt employees transitioned to work from home with limited shifts in library facilities to empty materials returns, provide telephone reference services, and provide email and telephone assistance with digital resources.

Adjustments were made to enable broader customer access to digital collections during the building closures. These included extensions of hold pickup and due dates into early May, adjustment of renewal and address check dates, and the removal of blocks on use of Wichita E-Reads materials by customers with outstanding fees on their accounts.

The Library website was redesigned to provide customers easier access to online resources for caregivers, educators, small businesses and job seekers impacted by COVID-19.

In an effort to meet demand for e-resources, the Library leveraged offers from publishers to make access to additional titles available at no charge or through vastly expanded availability of cost-per-checkout licensing. Purchasing of all physical materials was suspended with acquisitions budgets redirected to underwrite digital offerings.

Not surprisingly, local digital collections use set several new records during March.

- **Monthly circulation:** 20,233 e-checkouts. This is a 28% increase over the previous circulation high set in February 2020, and a 47% increase over March 2019. 57% of these checkouts came between March 17th and March 31st, when the Library was closed to the public.
- **Daily circulation:** 1,021 e-checkouts. This is the first time e-circulation has exceeded 1,000 checkouts in a 24 hour period.
- **New e-card account holders:** 850. The previous high was 510 new users in a single month, a record which had stood since December 2011, the month the service launched to the public. Six hundred twenty seven of these registrations came between March 17 and March 31.
- **Unique digital collection users:** 4,351 users. More than 80% of these users checked items out between March 17 and March 31.

OTHER NEWS

It is unclear whether Library programs will be back to normal for the May through August timeline, although most programs remain tentatively in place until the need to cancel them arises. When appropriate, spring activities that were cancelled have been rescheduled for fall. Members of the Create Young Readers team have begun work on contingency plans that would start 2020 summer reading programs earlier in May and enable the programs to be completed virtually if social gathering limits prevent previously planned activities. Staff members involved in NEA Big Read: Wichita planning are also evaluating changes that may be required to that program.

The Library received a Humanities for All grant award from Humanities Kansas to focus on African American and Mexican American players in the early part of the 1900s who played in Wichita. After consultation with the Humanities Kansas staff, the \$7,600 grant was declined due to the uncertainty of summer programming in relation to COVID-19. A new application for the program will be submitted in 2021.

To improve performance of public computers, the Information Technology department has started a project to replace all hard drives in Library public computers. Staff are switching out the older mechanical hard drives with solid state drives (SSDs) which have no moving parts, making them perform better and last longer.

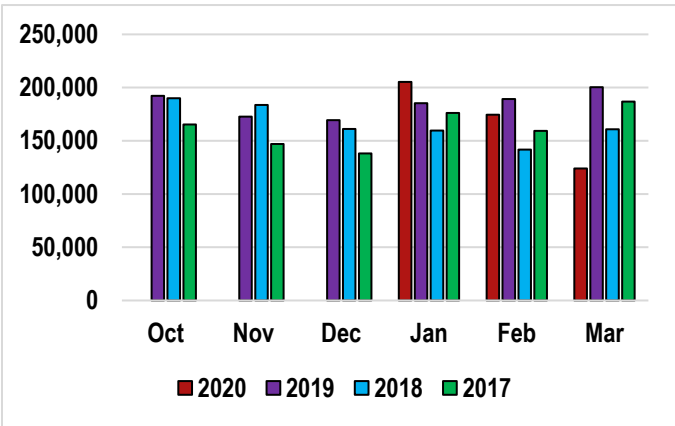
On March 5, the Women and Civic Engagement Panel featured three women in elected or appointed positions talking about gender diversity in government. Panelists included Vice Mayor Cindy Claycomb, County Commissioner Lacey Cruse and Judge Monique Centeno. The panel was moderated by Dr. Robin Henry from WSU.

In partnership with Watermark Books & Café, the Library hosted author Lisa See on March 12. She discussed her new book *The Island of Sea Women* and talked about the research she did in Korea with the women who were sea divers for their community's survival.

Agencies receiving special programs or services included: Libros book club; Via Christi Child Development Center; Loving Arms child care; TOP/North early literacy center; 2nd Street and West Village head start center; Cloud and Woodman elementary schools; Gordon Parks Academy; Campus and Maize South high schools; the Kansas Association of School Librarians; Orion Education and Training; East Heights UMC Children's Day Out; Green Eggs and Ham literacy fair; and four family care centers.

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

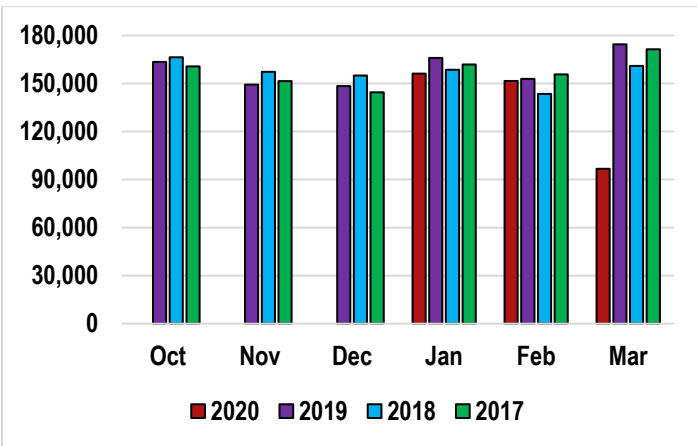
LIBRARY VISITS (door count, catalog sessions, and website visits)



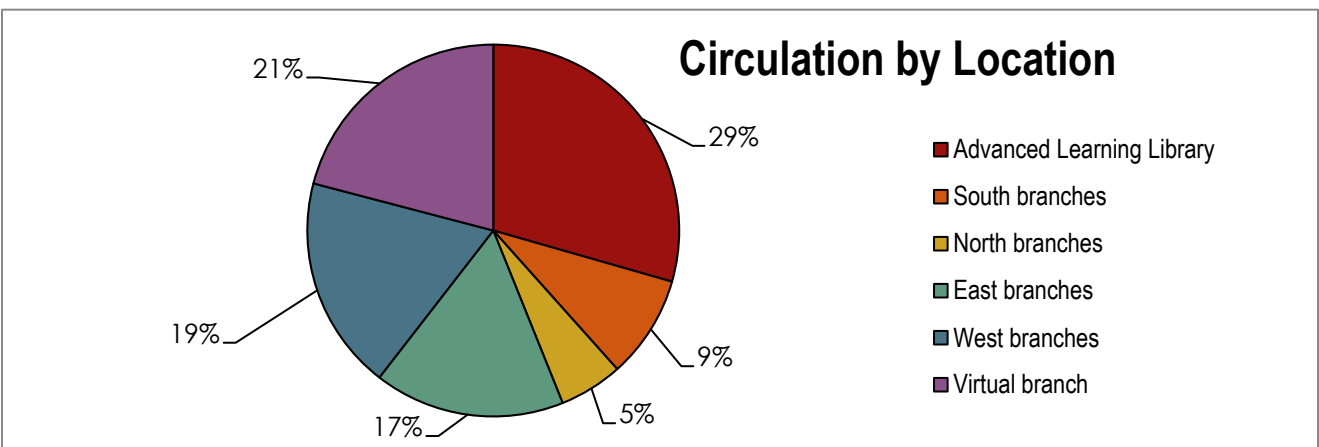
MARCH			
	2020	2019	% change
Door Counts	40,769	88,376	-53.87%
Catalog Use	32,197	47,907	-32.79%
Website Visits	50,967	64,088	-20.47%
Total	123,933	200,371	-38.15%

March door count for the Linwood branch was not available when this report was prepared.

CHECKOUTS

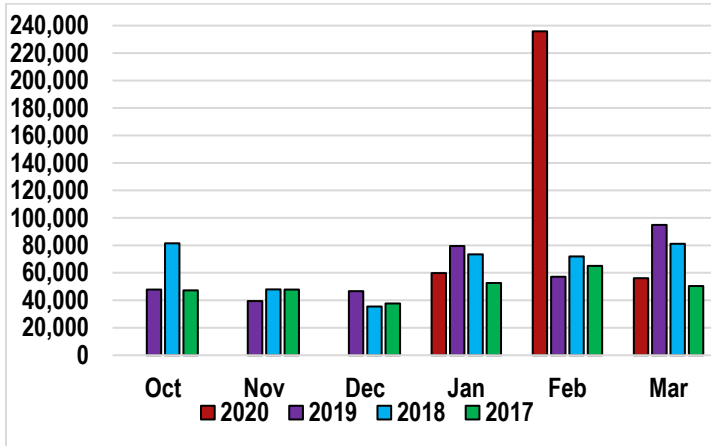


MARCH			
	2020	2019	% change
Physical Circ	76,470	153,383	-50.14%
Virtual Circ	20,233	21,080	-4.02%
WPL	20,233	13,794	46.68%
State	N/A	7,286	N/A
Total	96,703	174,463	-44.57%



State Library digital circulation data was not available when this report was prepared.

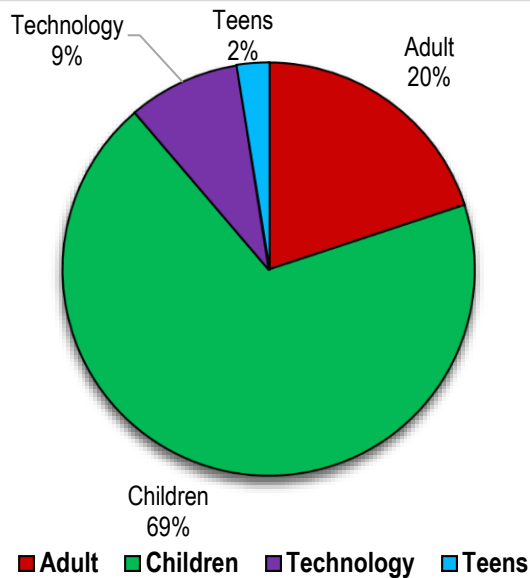
QUESTIONS ANSWERED (by staff in person/phone and through online services)



MARCH			
	2020	2019	% change
In person	N/A	8,689	N/A
Online	56,143	86,414	-35.03%
Total	56,143	95,103	-40.97%

In-person questions were not tracked in March.

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

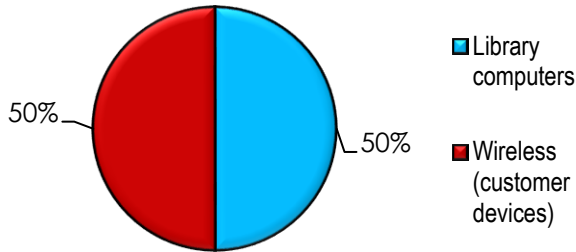


MARCH ATTENDANCE

	2020	2019	% change
Adult events	651	1,398	-53.43%
Children's events	2,248	5,733	-60.79%
Technology training	287	368	-22.01%
Teen events	80	112	-28.57%
TOTAL	3,266	7,611	-57.09%

PUBLIC COMPUTING

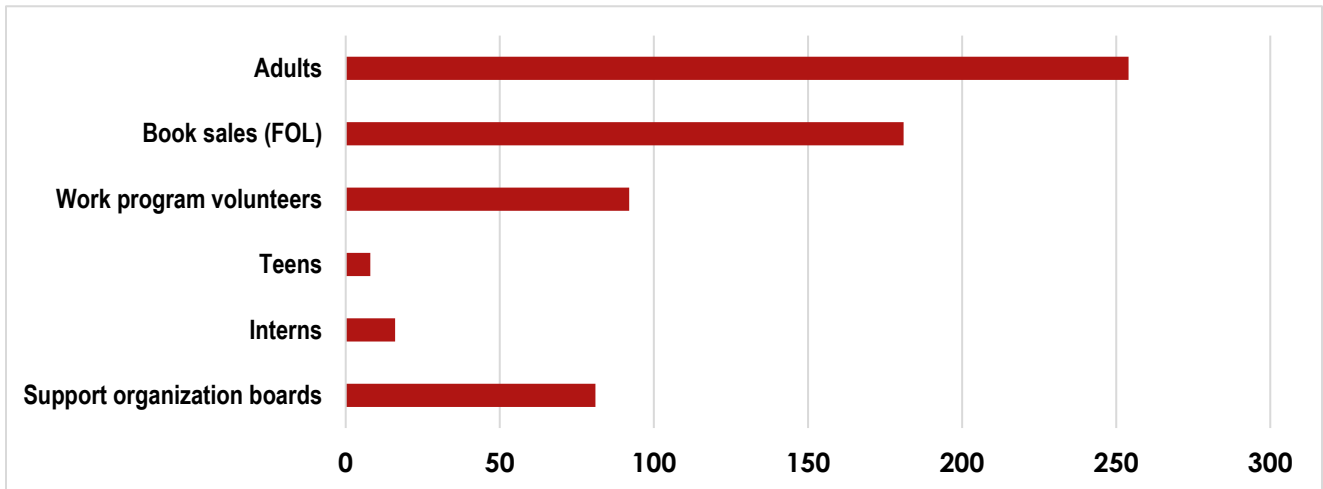
**Method of Computing Access
(by session)**



MARCH

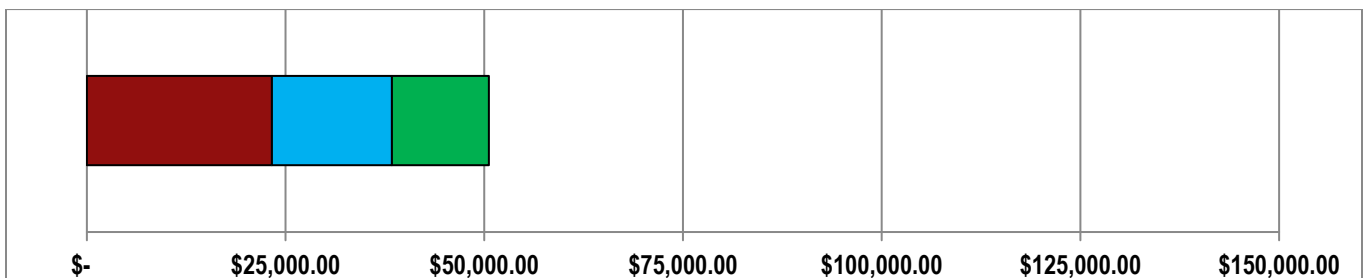
	2020	2019	% change
Library Workstation Sessions	5,537	11,370	-51.30%
Wi-Fi Sessions	5,542	9,142	-39.38%
Number of Users	790	2,144	-63.15%
Hours of Access	8,112	13,491	-39.87%

VOLUNTEERS (hours of service)



Number of volunteers YTD = 103 Hours of service received = 3,155

MATERIALS DONATIONS (value if purchased)



Year to date total = \$50,576.25 Items added to Library collections YTD = 2,963

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

SERVICE SNAPSHOT: Recent Raving Fans Stories

Several customers were ecstatic that their library material due dates were automatically extended for the duration of the library closure. This was one less thing they had to worry about as a result of the pandemic.

The overall response from customers regarding the Library's response to COVID-19 has been positive. Customers registered for e-cards at a higher rate than normal, and customers thanked staff for continuing to provide the community with library services despite the physical closure.

Alford Library Assistant Jim Chipman assisted a visitor to Wichita who found a lost wallet. The wallet contained no contact information for the individual, but the visitor found the individual's library card and knew the Library would have that person's contact information. Mr. Chipman worked with the visitor to have the wallet taken to a police substation and then notified the owner where the wallet could be claimed.

John Cleary, Business Librarian, received an email from a grant writer he works with: *"Several months ago I promised John I would add up the grants my clients have won because we found foundations through WPL's subscription to Foundation Directory Online. My best estimate that WPL can share the credit for is \$252,000...Bottom line is THANK YOU for your contribution to nonprofit organizations in Wichita that are working to make our city a better place."*

A customer's child who was studying abroad in Italy needed access to their course materials. Because Italy was in lockdown, the student didn't have the physical book for the online class. A librarian assisted the family by finding digital copies in the public domain the student could use to continue coursework.

During the closure, a woman needing a copy of *Tuck Everlasting* for her child to read for school. She wanted her child to get started reading it before the branch reopened so Westlink branch manager Tracie Partridge checked the Wichita E-Reads collection but found that the book was already on a waiting list. Tracie did further research and found a copy available through the State Library's collection so she issued the customer a Kansas library e-card over the phone and waited while the customer got everything downloaded and set up. The customer was thrilled that she was able to get the book and have her child start reading immediately.

A customer called the Rockwell branch after buildings had been closed to the public but before telephone service was consolidated at the Advanced Learning Library. The customer calls often to check on her holds and items out. She was very surprised when branch manager Savannah Ball answered the phone. She had expected a recording and did not realize that staff were offering telephone service. The customer thanked staff for "being there" and helping even though the facility was closed.