



Monthly Activity Report

March 2021

Service Highlights

On Monday, March 8, all locations reopened for Grab-and-Go service. This operating model lets customers browse for materials on shelves, use public computers and access free wi-fi service. All lounging furniture has been removed from each location to avoid gatherings. Customers and staff are still asked to wear a mask, sanitize and practice social distancing.

Library staff continue to issue e-cards to schools. In March, staff gave nearly 200 e-cards to students at All Saints Elementary School.

The Academy Awards® Short Film program registration began in late March. The event will be offered on a virtual cinema. Those who register will receive links to watch any of the three categories they request: animation, live action and documentary. Each category has five short films, which are 40 minutes or less. The programs will be available for viewing in early April, and registrations will remain open until April 30, or until the maximum views are reached. This is the Library's 35th year of showing the nominated films. This year's program is underwritten by the Leonard & Celia Levand Trust.

After a rain delay, the Rockwell Branch offered its first in-person program (outside) on Friday, March 26. "Chalk the Sidewalk" invited families to play games and work through obstacle course all drawn in chalk by Youth Services Librarian Katrina York. Visitors were also encouraged to draw their own masterpiece in the free draw area.

The Westlink Branch received two replacement self-check stations that customers are able to use to borrow and renew materials, and pay fees with cash or credit. This service helps reduce wait times for customers needing to borrow materials at the circulation desk as well as providing an option for more privacy. These self-check machines are the same as the ones at the Advanced Learning Library and will give customers a more unified experience among locations. As library branches are remodeled as part of the Master Plan for Branch Libraries, they too will have the standardized self-check options.

The Library Foundation received a Humanities Kansas grant of \$7,430 for the Library to offer a summer program called "Wichita's Diverse History of Baseball: A Candid Conversation," highlighting the history of baseball in Wichita through the lens of race and diversity.

Other News

The Library launched its podcast, "Read. Return. Repeat.," on Friday, March 5. The podcast is hosted by Adult Programming Librarian Sara McNeil and is a counterpart of the #ReadICT Reading Challenge. Each episode examines selected categories for the reading challenge, taking a close look at the category, and features interviews from subject specialists and book recommendations. The podcast is available on several platforms and features an audio and video component, as well as a transcription for customers who are deaf or have hearing challenges. Visit www.wichitalibrary.org/podcast for more information and to listen.

The Spring Gardening Series began on March 25 and continues through April 22. This program is presented through a partnership with K-State Research and Extension – Sedgwick County and their Master Gardeners program. The series is offered virtually on Thursday evenings from 6-7:30 p.m. Due to COVID-19, the 2020 series was canceled and brought back for 2021.

Work began on the Children's STEAM Garden at the Advanced Learning Library. Contractors have been busy getting the area ready for construction. Towards the end of the month, the support beams for the shade element were installed. The project is scheduled to be completed in May, just in time for the Summer Reading Program.

Video work has begun for virtual storytimes that will be available to Summer Reading Program participants this summer on Vimeo. In March, Westlink librarians Eva and Dawn filmed a reenactment of Mo Willems's *Elephants Cannot Dance* along with several other segments for Nursery Rhyme Time and Preschool Storytime.

In keeping with current COVID-19 topics in the news, the Library's March Tuesday Topics program, "Public Health in Sedgwick County," featured County Commissioner Pete Meitzner and Phillip Brownlee (Medical Society of Sedgwick County) discussing Sedgwick County's response to the coronavirus pandemic and Senate Bill 40.

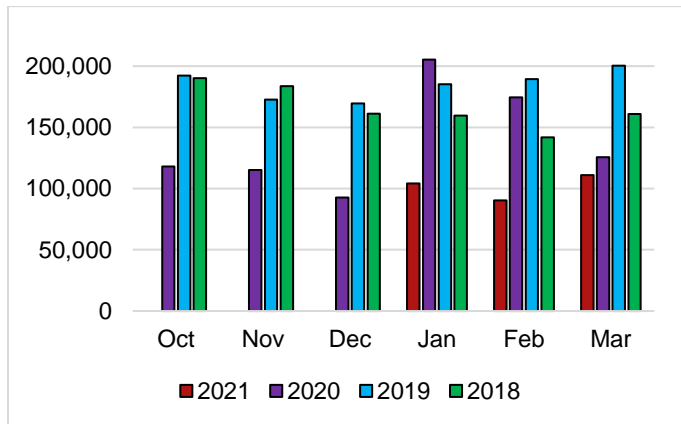
Special Collections received 394 new genealogy volumes and 369 new Kansas reference volumes. Many were local college and high school yearbooks and local organization cookbooks.

Staff has noticed book set circulation rising back to pre-COVID levels. Clubs meeting in churches and senior centers have resumed book clubs as social distancing guidelines allow.

Service Dashboard

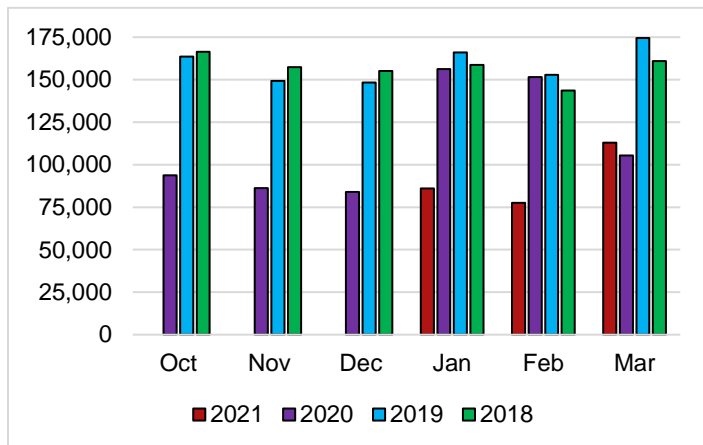
From November 25, 2020-March 7, 2021, all locations were limited to curbside and drive-up services. The Evergreen Branch closed on November 30, 2020 for renovations and a temporary outlet opened on December 21 at the Evergreen Recreation Center. The Linwood Park Branch closed on January 15, 2021 and the Walters Branch opened on February 1. Although services have expanded, they are still reduced from pre-COVID levels.

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

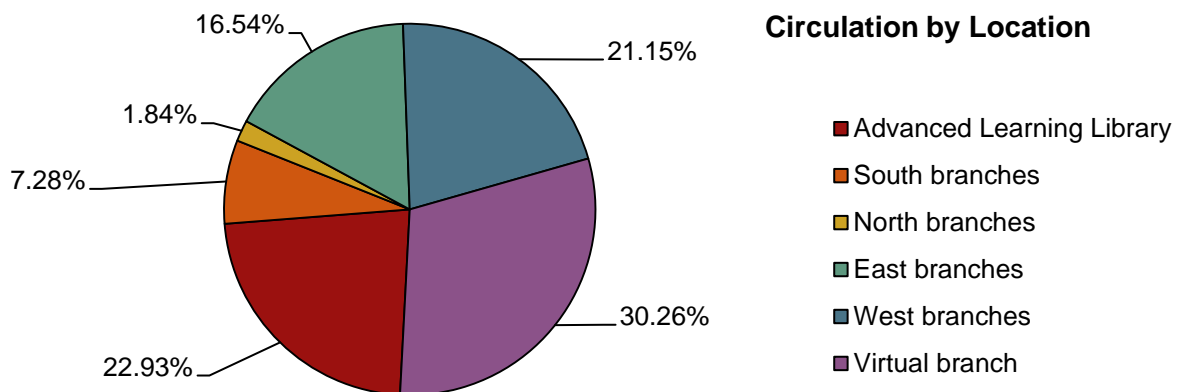


MARCH			
	2021	2020	% change
Door Counts	26,420	42,385	-37.67%
Catalog Log-ins	38,382	32,197	19.21%
Website Visits	46,168	50,967	-9.42%
Total	110,970	125,549	-11.61%

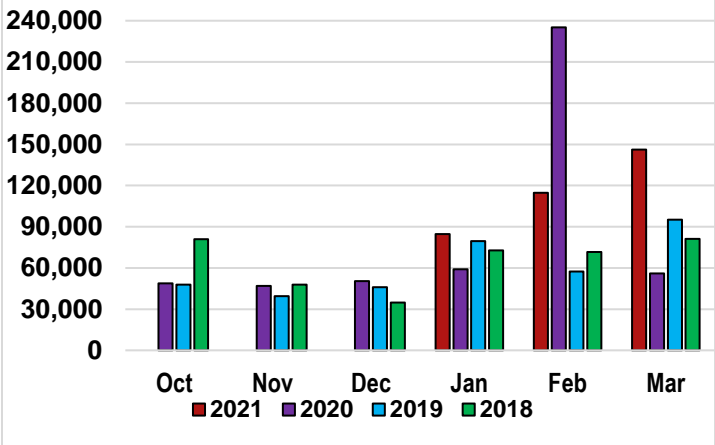
CHECKOUTS



MARCH			
	2021	2020	% change
Physical Circ	78,725	76,470	2.95%
Virtual Circ	34,152	28,967	17.90%
WPL	27,051	20,233	33.70%
State	7,101	8,734	-18.70%
Total	112,877	105,437	7.06%

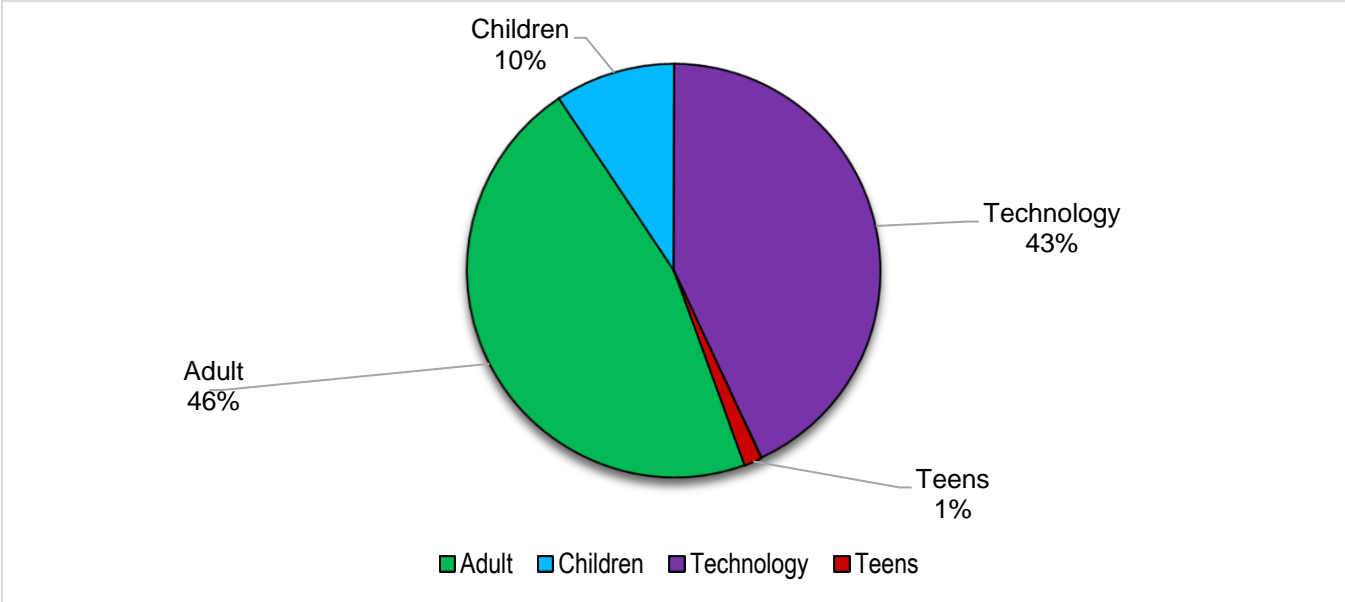


QUESTIONS ANSWERED (by staff in person/phone and through online services)



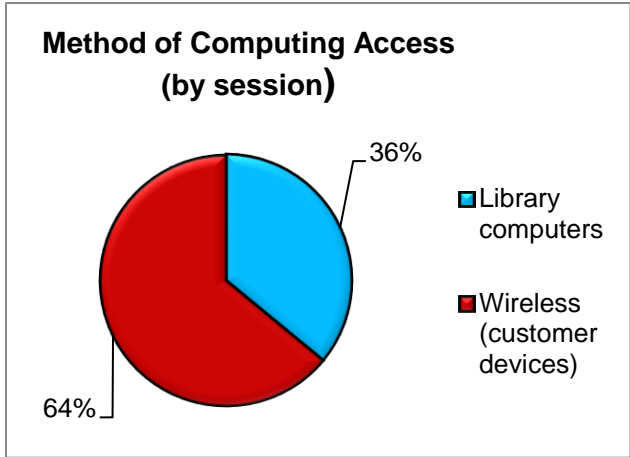
MARCH			
	2021	2020	% change
In person	4,663	N/A	N/A
Online	141,584	56,070	152.51%
Total	146,247	56,070	160.83%

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



MARCH ATTENDANCE			
	2021	2020	% change
Adult events	231	651	-64.52%
Children's events	47	2248	-97.91%
Technology training	215	287	-25.09%
Teen events	7	80	-91.25%
TOTAL	500	3266	-84.69%

PUBLIC COMPUTING

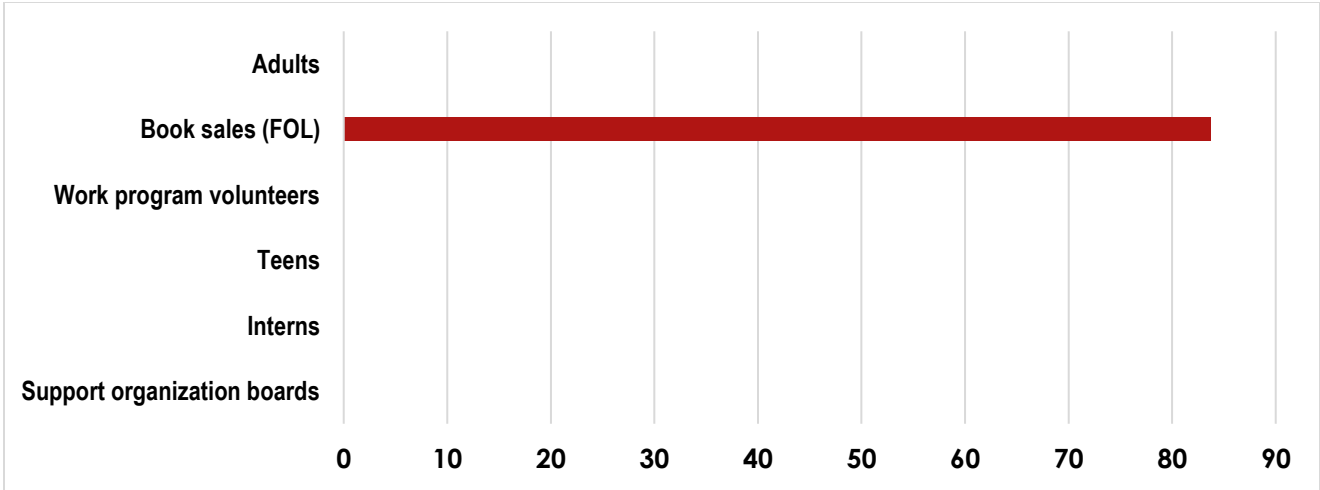


MARCH

	2021	2020	% change
Workstation Sessions	2,573	5,537	-53.53%
Wi-Fi Sessions	4,576	5,542	-17.43%
Number of Users	355	790	-55.06%
Hours of Access	4,923	8,112	-39.31%

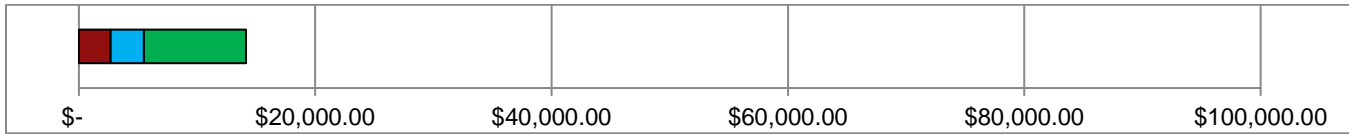
Due to a reporting discrepancy, Wi-Fi usage data at the Walters Branch in March 2021 are estimated.

VOLUNTEERS (hours of service)



Number of volunteers YTD = 8 Hours of service YTD = 112

MATERIALS DONATIONS (value if purchased)



Year to date total = \$14,147.20 Items added to Library collections YTD = 873

Service Snapshot: Recent Raving Fans Stories

When customers learned that the Library system would reopen, they expressed their gratitude for the service they were able to receive during curbside operations:

- *“Thank you for what you have continued to do during this time. We really appreciate it. You have been wonderful.”*
- *“Thank you so much for what you have done. You have helped us so much. You are heroes.”*
- *“You guys are so unfailingly wonderful, I appreciate you all!”*

When the Westlink Branch opened Monday morning, there were customers eagerly waiting outside. They applauded when staff unlocked the doors. Over the course of the day, 339 individuals visited the branch and 245 people borrowed 1,150 materials.

A customer was sad to learn there were no more spots left in the Excel series of programs offered in March. Library Clerk Hanah Denning asked the customer if they had a Kansas Library Card, and after learning she did, Hanah informed her of the online learning resource Universal Class that’s available through the State Library of Kansas. The customer was excited to learn that she would be able to take Excel classes and could complete them at her own pace.

Customers have asked if staff is able to laminate COVID vaccine cards. Since the Library isn’t able to offer this service, customers have been appreciative of staff for finding places they can visit. Office Depot is offering free lamination of vaccine cards.

A customer was looking for an English-Spanish medical dictionary. She is a teacher and some of her students were having a difficult time translating some of the English medical terms. Library Assistant Kevin Wilkin at the Advanced Learning Library helped her find a book in the World Languages section that would help her, so she didn’t have to wait for an Interlibrary Loan request. After retrieving the book from Kevin, the customer said “You rock!”

A customer at the Rockwell Branch Library was confused why she had an email from Libby saying her hold was ready to borrow, but when she went into Libby, it showed she still had weeks to wait. Several staff members looked into this for her and realized her old library card number was still active in Libby, and it had not picked up her new library card. Staff was able to merge her accounts and move her up the hold list. She was delighted that staff took the time not only to identify the problem, but to fix it and let her know.

Teen Librarian Sara Moesel was able to provide assistance to two fellow librarians. She offered an extensive write up of her Teen Dungeons & Dragons program and advice on how to implement it in a rural Kansas library, and also assisted a librarian from the State Library of Louisiana with information about the new Teen Library Ambassador program.