

FFRPL Report to MCLS & RPL Boards – April 2020

OFFICE UPDATE: FFRPL's five FT and two PT staff are doing OK for now – we are all working from home as much as possible on long-simmering projects, research and online professional development opportunities, along with the toughest, strangest job of all: just getting through each day.

ADVANCEMENT REPORT

FFRPL COVID-19 Support to RPL: FFRPL has agreed to honor all FY2019-20 financial commitments to RPL, despite huge losses in our endowment/investment funds, and decreased Annual Campaign and online book sales revenue. FFRPL has also agreed to cover the initial costs of leasing 500 MiFi internet mobile hot spots which Central Library amazingly managed to acquire, process and lend all within the five days before closing to the public in mid-March; we are happy to help bring the internet into patrons' homes so they can remain connected to their work and school. And just this week we agreed to cover the \$1400 first-year costs of starting up a new Chat Reference service, as initiated by MCLS Associate Director Adam Traub.

Annual Campaign: Responses are coming in – far fewer than usual, but still something – to the third and final Annual Campaign letter of FY2019-20, which landed in homes the first week of March. From 1 July 2019 to 9 March 2020, the Campaign had drawn more than 1440 gifts totaling \$187,400, slightly ahead of last year in number of gifts and money raised. Reporting right now is a bit soft, but since that date we estimate we have received an additional \$25,000 from about 125 gifts, either through direct mail or online.

Resiliency is key! We may participate in the May 5 #GivingTuesday and/or schedule a May teleparty as we expect the Spring Campaign to fall short of our \$240,000 goal. We are also considering long-term fundraising strategies in light of COVID and social distancing.

Donor Tours: Our last Library tour and meeting with legacy donors was Tuesday 10 March, with Sally Millick as our Board representative. Although scheduled March-May tours have been cancelled, we are still including tour invitations in our Thank You letters, asking interested donors to contact Rebecca Fuss to be placed on a waiting list.

Donor Relations: FFRPL staff are contacting donors and volunteers by phone and email to see how they are doing and tell them about ways that FFRPL is supporting RPL in providing services and information to patrons. Fundraising professionals speculate that post-COVID donors will still make charitable gifts, but to fewer organizations and only ones that have the most meaning to them, so strong relationships are key. Plus, we just miss seeing our usual friends at the Library.

Grant proposals: We have had some very welcome news recently: the day RPL closed to the public last month we received notice of a \$35,000 grant from the William & Sheila Konar Foundation for *Safe to be Smart*. Note this message from Program Director Marilyn Patterson Grant: “Our Board was impressed by not only the *Safe to be Smart* Initiative but Mr. Coley's commitment and that of his team in providing a haven and supportive environment for the youth of our community.” And just this week we learned the Max & Marian Farash Foundation has granted us \$12,000 for *StbS* for the third year in a row.

Pending proposals include: For *Safe to be Smart* (FFRPL's single largest recurring expense, at ~\$132,750/yr): Joan & Harold Feinbloom Foundation, MAXIMUS Foundation; For South Wedge branch outreach (including *StbS*) – Chase Rippey Trust; and for Festival-To-Go (part of the *Rochester Children's Book Festival*) – Odd Fellow & Rebekah Benefit Fund.

Advocacy: The Central Library Orientation & Tour for Monroe County legislators and administration in March was cancelled, but FFRPL will participate when/if there is a rescheduled event.

PROGRAMS / MARKETING & EVENTS REPORT

Quick summary of activities: kept online versions of programs and projects active (*Books Sandwiched In* talks moved online, *Sokol High School Literary Contest* judged); updated FFRPL homepage to reflect evolving Library response to COVID-19 and continued marketing/PR efforts across all platforms (website, e-blasts, Facebook); corresponded with patrons.

Spring 2020 *Books Sandwiched In*

Contacted all reviewers at onset of social distancing, requesting submission of videos from home (with tips on best home video practices); passed videos to Central Library staff for text/closed captioning and posting to Central's [YouTube channel BSI playlist](#). To date, only one of eight reviewers has been unable to submit a video review.

Sokol High School Literary Awards

Maintained correspondence with students, committee members and judges; sent finalists to judges for selection of winners; notified winners and finalists. Note: *Sokol Awards* ceremony and reception (scheduled for early May) will be rescheduled (the 'obviously' is silent).

Congratulations to the winners of the 2020 Sokol H.S. Literary Awards!
Information on the Awards Ceremony and Reception will be posted here and on our web site.

POETRY	PROSE
FIRST PRIZE (\$300) MIDNIGHT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION Elise McCamant 12th grade, Pittsford Sutherland H.S.	FIRST PRIZE (\$300) COBWEBS Elise McCamant 12th grade, Pittsford Sutherland H.S.
SECOND PRIZE (\$200) AFTER SOME TIME Raeona Hampton 12th grade, School of the Arts	SECOND PRIZE (\$200) THE RIVER Jenna Le 12th grade, School of the Arts
THIRD PRIZE (\$100) TABULA RASA Tyler Curtis 12th grade, Greece Athena H.S.	THIRD PRIZE (\$100) THE DINER Madison Sutherland 11th grade, School of the Arts
PERFORMANCE PRIZE (\$300): GRACIE AND ALICE Emerson Ormond 10th grade, Webster Schroeder H.S.	



Friends & Foundation of the
Rochester Public Library

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March 30, 2020

Annual Huge Used Book Sale, 11-14 March

Organized, promoted and presented the annual Huge Used Book Sale, implementing additional safety measures once COVID-19 restrictions began that week (e.g., limiting the number of patrons permitted in the auditorium, requiring hand sanitizing of patrons entering and additional cleaning of space). Approx. revenue: \$8,600 (higher than average).

FFRPL e-blasts

Wrote, designed, scheduled newsletters for 3/12, 3/17, 3/30, 4/3; special mailings to *Sokol* list and to volunteers for Volunteer Recognition Week. To the left, the e-blast of 3/30, requesting patrons/donors send us their own Library stories. Below, MCLS Trustee Peter Knapp shares his story:

I grew up using The Farmer's Library in Spencerport (Ogden) in the 1950's. The library was located on the 2nd floor of the Village firehouse. Mrs. Stewart was our librarian. Her desk was located right in front of the windows (the only two windows!) looking onto Main Street. I was a steady user of the library in 5th grade being able to ride my bike from home. Mrs. Stewart would let me get behind her desk when the fire siren went off calling the volunteers to rush to the firehouse below to man the trucks. It was always thrilling to see men coming out from the various shops, bars, and work places and jumping onto the emerging trucks. Just about as exciting as riding the Erie Canal lift bridge up in the air when a boat came through town! The bridge-master used to let us do that sometimes. Life in small town America in the fifties...

To all our friends and Library lovers: in these unparalleled times, please stay safe and healthy! Thanks to your help, FFRPL continues to support the Rochester Public Library in providing public access to resources and information.

All MCLS libraries are currently closed, but remote and online services to the community continue: [see what your local library is doing](#).

Because of your past support, FFRPL was able to help Central Library quickly acquire and distribute nearly **500 mobile hotspots** March 16-20 to patrons who didn't have a WiFi connection at home ... while the Library **increased materials available on OverDrive** for patrons to access remotely for free ... and we **offered online programs** such as *Books Sandwiched In* ([watch the recent review of 'The Yellow House' and archived BSI and Tuesday Topics here](#)).

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to the Library after COVID-19 has been addressed. Until then, we'd love to stay connected with you during these tough times. If you have a Library story we'd like to hear it: a special memory, your favorite branch growing up, what the Library means to you -- anything, really (and pictures if you've got them). Please send stories to ffrpl.stories@libraryweb.org, and let us know if it's ok to share them in some later online compilation.

Thank you in advance for your continued support. FFRPL can only do all these things because of your help: if you're able, [please donate here](#) to support essential Library efforts now and in the future (link opens in a separate, secure window).

Stay safe: we hope to see you soon!