



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Clerk

491 East Pioneer Avenue

Homer, Alaska 99603

clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-3130

(f) 907-235-3143

Memorandum

Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD
FROM: ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I
DATE: APRIL 16, 2024
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET

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Library Director's Report

April 15, 2024

General Notes

April 7-13 was National Libraries Week. HPL launched its new library card designs and also launched the library needs survey, which will be available through July 31.

We have tentatively signed up to participate in the Human Library, possibly next January. The Human Library is an international project that encourages one-on-one conversation between members of the public who might never cross paths normally. Details remain to be determined.

After a couple of years, the Wednesday Community Outreach to youth program is wrapping up.

On April 9, students from Homer High School presented a travelogue about their trip to Australia. A dozen kids showed off pictures, told stories and raffled off small packages of vegemite.

Staff Notes

I was out of state from March 23 to April 13.

Cinda Nofziger and two representatives from FHL made a special presentation to the Downtown Rotary Club on April 11. The talk covered programs and services offered by the library, as well as an overview of everything the Friends do, and wrapped up with a description of the western lot project.

Director's meetings:

- Staff: 2
- LAB: 1
- FHL: 3
- Council: 1
- Department Heads: 2
- Other: Various city meetings, data-gathering workshop, Agnew::Beck about the comprehensive plan, several vendors, 2 meetings on the Human Library, 1 meeting about OWL

Facility

The new office chairs for the library have arrived. The lounge chairs should arrive in late April.

Library Advisory Board (LAB)

The LAB finalized the text of the 10-question survey they will administer to the general public between April 7 and July 31. The goal is to develop a clear sense of what the public needs from the library. We hope to get a couple of these questions into the comprehensive plan surveys as well.

Friends of the Homer Library (FHL)

FHL discussed the lessons learned from the Big Read and the planning underway for the Celebration of Lifelong Learning and the spring book and plant sale. On April 11, Cheryl, Lyn and Cinda gave a presentation to the Downtown Rotary Club about library programs. The western lot project is moving ahead: new posts and signboards for the Story Walk Trail have arrived, the text for the signs is nearly complete, we are starting to get designs for benches, and Doug Baily and I will collaborate on moving large boulders around.

Joint LAB/FHL Projects

The LAB and FHL board held their annual soiree at the library on March 3. There was excellent food and a chance to meet people that otherwise would never cross paths.

Ongoing Events

Mondays, 1:30-4:30: Knitting Club

Wednesdays, 10:30-11:00: Toddler Time

Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30: Chess Club

Thursdays, 3:30-4:30: After School at the Library

Fridays, 10:30-11:30: Preschool Storytime

Fridays, 3:30-5:45: Live-Action Role Playing (LARP)

First Tuesday, 6:30-8:00: SPARC Radio Club

First Thursday, 1:00-3:00: Literary Ladies

First and Third Thursdays, 5:30-7:30: Tech Help

Second Wednesdays, 4:45-5:45: Teen Advisory Board

Second Saturdays, 10:30-12:30: Writing Circle with Richard Chiappone

Third Thursday, 10:30-11:30: Radio Storytime on KBBI

Fourth Tuesday, 4:30-6:30: FHL/HPL Book Club

Tuesday following the first City Council meeting of the month, 12:00-1:00: Conversations with a Councilmember (schedule may vary depending on availability)

Special Events

- **Mar. 1: A large display screen goes up at the front desk. Staff will use it for public announcements and to advertise upcoming events.**
- Mar. 1, 10:00—12:00: Homer Pottery Tour.
- Saturdays, Mar. 2-30, 3:00-4:30: Seed and Soil.
- Mar. 5, 12:00-1:00: Voznesenka School visits the library.
- Mar. 5, 1:30-3:30: Homer Pickleball.
- **Mar. 5, 4:30-6:00: Wii Sports for Tweens and Teens.**
- Mar. 12, 4:15-6:00: Food Not Bombs.
- Mar. 12, 6:15-7:45: Kachemak Bay Swim Club.
- Mar. 14, 12:00-2:00: TRAILS/ILC.
- **Mar. 14, 2:30-5:00: Children's staff show a superhero movie.**
- Mar. 14, 5:30-7:45: Workshop for first-time homebuyers.
- Mar. 19, 6:00-7:45: Silent Book Club.
- Mar. 21, 11:00-12:30: Homer OPUS.
- Mar. 22, 2:00-3:30: Homer Drawdown.
- Mar. 23, 12:30-2:00: Childbirth education workshop.
- Mar. 25: Library closed for Seward's Day.
- **Mar. 27, 4:45-5:45: Teens and Tweens Get Crafty.**
- Mar. 28, 5:00-7:00: Food Not Bombs.
- Apr. 2, 10:00-11:00: Virtual author talk with Smithsonian curator Paula J. Johnson on the book *Smithsonian American Table: The Foods, People and Innovations That Feed Us*.

- Apr. 5, 10:00-3:30: Homer Eyecare.
- Apr. 5, 6:00-9:00: Defenders of Wildlife.
- Apr. 9, 10:00-11:00: Virtual author Talk with Colum McCann and Diane Foley on their book *American Mother*, about the murder of Foley's son by ISIS terrorists.
- **Apr. 9, 5:30-7:30: Homer High School students present a travelogue about their trip to Australia.**
- Apr. 9, 5:45-7:30: Surfrider Kenai Peninsula.
- **Apr. 11: Cinda Nofziger, Cheryl Illg and Lyn Maslow present to the Downtown Rotary Club about the western lot project, as well as library and Friends of the Library programs.**
- Apr. 11, 5:00-7:00: Food Not Bombs.
- Apr. 12, 10:30-12:00: Let's Talk Politics.
- **Apr. 12, 2:30-4:30: Library staff play Dungeons and Dragons with teens.**
- Apr. 16, 6:15-7:45: Kachemak Bay Swim Club.
- Apr. 17, 4:00-5:00: Virtual author talk with Xochitl Gonzalez, author of *Anita de Monte Laughs Last*, about art and society in New York of the late 1990s.
- **Apr. 20, 6:00-8:00: Celebration of Lifelong Learning, featuring food from the Tickled Pear, desserts from BB's Bakery, live music, a silent auction and a trivia tree.**
- Apr. 23, 11:00-12:00: Independent Living Center.
- Apr. 25, 5:00-7:00: Food Not Bombs.
- Apr. 27, 9:00-2:30: League of Women Voters statewide meeting.
- Apr. 30, 1:30-4:00: Homer Pickleball Club.
- **Apr. 30, 4:30-6:00: Crafternoon for teens and tweens.**
- Apr. 30, 6:00-7:30: Community Engagement—What's On the Ballot?

Homer Public Library Statistical Summary for 2023

Date: 16-Apr-24

CIRCULATION	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Y.T.D.
TOTAL (*Included)	14,636	14,431	15,039	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44,106
*Physical Print/Audio/Video	11,344	11,115	11,546										34,005
*Other Physical items (n. 2)	91	90	75										256
*Alaska Digital Library	2,936	2,975	3,219										9,130
*Flipster e-magazines	41	18	36										95
*Kanopy streaming video	224	233	163										620
INTERLIBRARY LOANS													
Incoming (Borrowed)	19	11	12										42
Outgoing (Lent)	28	26	24										78
BUILDING USE													
Gate Count	8,880	8,111	8,662										25653
Study Rooms (# of group sessions)	266	238	229										733
Study Rooms (# of people)	499	454	442										1395
Meeting Room (# of group sessions)	27	30	36										93
Meeting Room (# of people)	206	214	309										729
INTERNET USE													
TOTAL (*Included)	2,315	3,288	3,045	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,648
*Wireless Internet sessions	1,169	2,190	1,923										5282
*Hardwired Internet sessions	1,146	1,098	1,122										3366
Website visits (sessions)	3,415	3,136	2,813										9,364
PROGRAM ATTENDANCE (n. 1)													
TOTAL (*Included)	1,205	1,101	573	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2879
*Programs for Age 0-5	900	884	272										2056
*Programs for Age 6-11	31	47	62										140
*Programs for Age 12-18	26	16	41										83
*Programs for Age 19+	150	134	196										480
*Programs for All Ages	98	20	2										120
OUTREACH													
# Events	3	1	2										6
# People	11	9	9										29
NEW CARDS ISSUED													
City	38	24	20										82
Borough	19	28	21										68
Temporary	1	0	0										1
Reciprocal	0	0	3										3
VOLUNTEER HOURS													
# of people	71	75	76										222
# of hours	248	217	243										708
MATERIALS ADDED													
Books	287	219	155										661
Audio	9	9	11										29
Video	41	34	33										108
Serials	0	0	0										0
Electronic Resources	50	41	60										151
MATERIALS REMOVED													
Books	73	25	57										155
Audio	21	74	4										99
Video	0	101	1										102
Serials	1	0	0										1
Electronic Resources	0	0	0										0
REVENUES DEPOSITED													
Fines/Fees/Copies	1000.00	791.00	1453.00	969.45									4,213.45
Building Fund (151-)													0.00
Library Gifts (803-)													0.00
Endowment													0.00
Grants	725.00												725.00
TOTALS	1,725.00	791.00	1,453.00	969.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$4,938.45

Data not available yet or incomplete

Note 1: Program attendance includes all programs sponsored by the library or the Friends of the Library. It does not include meetings of community groups. Programs are sorted by the age of the target audience, but totals include all attendees (i.e. parents as well as toddlers, etc.)

Note 2: Other physical items includes electronic devices, kits, toys, board games, sports equipment and videogames.

BPL, SPL Release Joint Report on Banned Books

Apr 11, 2024

The Brooklyn Public Library and the Seattle Public Library have released a joint report, "[In Their Own Words: Youth Voices on Books Unbanned](#)," documenting responses from library patrons ages 13-26 who participated in the libraries' Books Unbanned program, which distributed nearly 13,000 library cards to young people across the United States, Guam, and Puerto Rico, granting them free access to the libraries' digital collections. "Collectively, Books Unbanned cardholders from these two library systems have checked out over 286,000 books," and "both libraries have been flooded with thousands of testimonials from young people across the country who have signed up for the program, openly sharing their experiences with censorship and other barriers to accessing books and libraries, along with their desire to exercise their right to choose what they read." The report can be read [here: www.booksunbanned.com](http://www.booksunbanned.com)

(excerpt below)

Books Unbanned

Brooklyn Public Library joins those fighting for the rights of teens nationwide to read what they like, discover themselves, and form their own opinions. Inspired by the American Library Association's [Freedom to Read Statement](#), BPL's Books Unbanned initiative is a response to an increasingly coordinated and effective effort to remove books tackling a wide range of topics from library shelves.

"The freedom to read is the freedom to explore and uncover worlds that were previously unknown. It is the ability to understand the important conversations being discussed around you, and the decisions that are being made on the Congress floor. To have the freedom to read taken away is equivalent to taking away the ability to see, to talk, to listen, to understand, to be compassionate, and to be informed. How can one learn if they are restricted to a certain selection of books?"

—Age 16, Georgia

"They are banning some of my favorite books and it makes me feel very unwelcome in my school.

Thank you for helping me."

—Age 17, Minnesota

youth voices on books unbanned

1. Introduction: “ This card gives me hope”

in recent years, public and school libraries across the United States have experienced an unprecedented wave of book challenges and bans. Censorship attempts—largely driven by a minority of vocal and well-networked individuals and groups—have become increasingly effective. Whether censorship takes root in the anti-democratic strategies of local groups, or is codified in state legislation, the results are the same: an erosion of First Amendment protections, criminalization of educators and librarians, and an empowering of a vocal minority’s narrow vision of what books can and cannot be read and whose stories should or should not be told. While studies show that the majority of the American public opposes book banning and censorship, documented instances of the number of challenged and banned titles in school and public libraries only continues to grow.

More difficult to capture in numbers is the impact of these restrictions on young readers. Teens and young adults nationwide are facing an extraordinary challenge to their freedom to read and to engage with knowledge, ideas, and stories that mirror their own experiences and expand their understanding of the world. It is the young people who identify with these stories who are at risk of getting hurt, marginalized, or pushed out of their communities. Their stories are found within this report.

In April 2022, Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) launched Books Unbanned, granting teens and young adults in the U.S., ages 13-21, free access to its entire digital collection of over half a million eBooks and audiobooks. The Seattle Public Library (sPL) followed suit in April 2023, offering free access to its digital collection for anyone in the U.S., ages 13-26. Through December 2023, these libraries have distributed over 12,750 cards to young adult readers in every single U.S. state, D.C., Guam and Puerto Rico. Collectively, Books Unbanned cardholders from these two library systems have checked out over 286,000 books.

Both libraries have been flooded with thousands of testimonials from young people across the country who have signed up for the program, openly sharing their experiences with censorship and other barriers to accessing books and libraries, along with their desire to exercise their right to choose what they read. These stories provide unique insight into the true scope and scale of censorship attempts impacting teen and young adult readers. Cardholders have also shared how attacks on the freedom to read overlap with other significant barriers to access, such as disability,

distance from a library system or lack of access to a robust digital collection.

Most importantly, these stories offer an opportunity to go beyond reported data and news media coverage to hear directly from those most affected: young readers caught in the middle of an escalating culture war. As they share the joy and escape they find in reading widely, Books Unbanned readers remind us of why the freedom to read matters in the first place. Their stories are both troubling and inspiring.

2 Overall Findings

- Books Unbanned cardholders are against censorship and they value having the freedom to read. Censorship is strengthening their curiosity—with many seeking out banned titles to know what’s being kept from them.
- The hidden forms of censorship faced by young people are far more difficult to report on but are intensified by the increasing atmosphere of fear, intimidation, and inflammatory rhetoric.
- Many young readers can’t afford to buy all the books they want or need to keep up with their reading habits, interests, and educational requirements. Some face additional affordability barriers: their local library charges prohibitive membership fees or they have outstanding late fees that lock them out of borrowing.
- Some don’t have access to a library at all. Multiple cardholders indicated that there is no library in their community, or that libraries are too far away and they lack transportation options, or libraries are temporarily or permanently closed or operate with limited hours. Some are ineligible for a library card due to not meeting residency requirements or lacking proper identification.
- Readers with disabilities face significant challenges accessing books, encountering difficulties in reaching their physical library branch and finding limited options in the accessible formats they need.
- The library collections they do have access to are often limited. Some cardholders noted that their local library is underfunded, with a small collection that doesn’t meet their needs. In some cases, they noted that community values and bias limit the diversity of titles and make certain subject matter inaccessible.
- The inability to access representative materials, especially for LGBtQia+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) and BiPoc

(Black, Indigenous, People of Color) cardholders, can exacerbate feelings of isolation and the sense that their identities are under attack.

■ For many young people, digital access to books is essential to the ability to read freely. The privacy afforded from online reading is particularly crucial for LGBTQia+ cardholders who are not out to their family or community.

■ Books Unbanned has had a tangible impact in providing access to young people without other options. Cardholders renewing after one year said they are reading more

and doing unwanted habits less, nurtured by their newfound access to books. Their stories demonstrate that Books Unbanned is supporting a new generation of readers.