

## OCPL Director's Report

November, 2020

**1. Programs and Services:** Due to the shutdown of the library in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (starting March 17), there have been no in-person programs (except as noted below) in the library since we reopened on June 15, 2020. The library did maintain a virtual presence through the website and social media with virtual book clubs and short video snippets about upcoming things like new kits. Darcy Arnall also began hosting outdoor Story Times at the Walhalla and Seneca locations in October at 10:30 a.m., as well as still adding new take home kits and other programming, like Book Bites; more information will be available in the branch and Youth Services reports. There are limits of persons allowed in at each location, which we have so far not exceeded or even come very close to the limits. There are no meeting rooms available for public use right now. We have hosted a few county meetings, such as a couple of meetings with Emergency Management at the Walhalla Main Branch. The Bookmobile began limited service again in August, with only pick up and drop off allowed. No one is permitted on board right now.

**2. Usage Statistics and Narratives:** Usage statistics for September and October and individual branch/department narratives are attached.

**3. Finance and Budget:** OCPL budget figures for FY20 year-to-date are attached. Neither the local budget nor State Aid have changed for this year, except as noted below under "Oconee County."

**4. Personnel and Training:** We have hired a Technology Services Librarian. His name is Michael Metzger from Rabun County, GA, and he joined the OCPL starting October 12, 2020. The library will not have an in-service on October 12 this year, as has been customary. With being closed several months for the pandemic, we want to prioritize hours open to the public over taking another day to be closed for staff training. We are planning to host one in April of 2021, pandemic permitting.

**5. Building and Grounds:** There is still a plan to replace the roof at the Seneca Library, and quotes are still being sought for that, as well as restriping the parking area there. The Friends of the Library have been collecting funds for a new service desk at the Seneca Branch in honor of Betty DuBose, the longtime librarian in Seneca, and that is now in the final phase. The Lakes and Hills Garden Club has met with Emily Whitmire and the Director to plan for a beautification/landscaping project for the Seneca Branch. The County has also begun a study of the lighting and HVAC in all county buildings with an eye towards replacing lighting and HVAC units with smarter technology that is more energy efficient, and all branches (except Salem, which is not owned by the county) should see some upgrades. They placed sensors in several locations in various branches for a couple of weeks to read both lighting output and temperature.

**6. Technology:** The library received a grant from the State Library for twenty Kajeet Mi-Fi units to assist with homework help in the fall. We have checked out several to school district personnel, and will be looking to check more out to student themselves, or partner with the United Way or Salvation Army to check more of the twenty out. The library also received a Cradlepoint unit for the Bookmobile, which

allows up to 100 connections at a time. We anticipate using this for establishing a route of Wi-Fi availability in various spots in the community during the school year. Earlier this year, we purchased two Ricoh Smartboards, and while we have not used them for the public yet, they have been useful for staff training and webinars.

**7. Friends of the Library:** Used book sales have restarted as appointment-only sales each Thursday from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The Friends have gathered many books from their vast inventory to make up grab bags for sale at the Walhalla Main Branch (\$3.00 each for 8-12 or maybe as many as 15 books from a particular genre in a brown paper bag). They have sold around 100 of those so far. The Friends are also looking into a partnership which would allow them to sell access inventory through a third party on Amazon.

**8. Oconee County:** County had passed a budget at the end of the fiscal year that was essentially the same budget as last year. Recently amended that budget slightly with a few more items, including raises for county employees, though those have not yet taken effect. The County also passed a mask ordinance for all county buildings in August, and renewed it though early December.

**9. State Library:** We received a \$1,000.00 grant under the CARES Act for reimbursement of some expenses related to buying PPE, hand sanitizing stations, and hand sanitizer. We also received the grant mentioned above for Kajeet Mi-Fi units and the Cradlepoint. They also want to partner with the library for a grant project to teach healthy eating and making healthier choices in general. The project would involve a mobile kitchen in a box, which we have received. Darcy Arnall will be arranging a couple of virtual programs for that.

**10. Community Involvement:** The library is currently participating in a mask drive with Prisma Health and SC DHEC. The Director is also participating with the Healthy Oconee Commission on the health disparities committee. Quientell Walker, Walhalla Branch Manager, has also assisted the Oconee History Museum with scanning and digitizing old yearbooks from the area.

**11. Other:** While some moments have been stressful for staff since we reopened, they have been very professional and steadfast, and it is appreciated.

**OCPL Bimonthly Report**  
**Library Usage Statistics**  
**Director: Blair Hinson**

	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Change	Oct 2019	Oct 2020	Change
Visits to Library	16,628	9,826	-40.9%	17,597	9,547	-45.7%
Material Circulation - Adult	15,143	13,923	-8.1%	16,609	13,496	-18.7%
Material Circulation - Youth	1,157	1,051	-9.2%	1,190	988	-17.0%
Material Circulation - Juvenile	7,170	7,010	-2.2%	7,932	7,497	-5.5%
<b>Total Material Circulation</b>	<b>23,470</b>	<b>21,984</b>	<b>-6.3%</b>	<b>25,731</b>	<b>21,981</b>	<b>-14.6%</b>
Internet Users	0	670		0	731	
Internet Hours of Use	0	249		0	269	
New Cards Issued	159	114	-28.3%	165	123	-25.5%
Programs - Adult	8	9	12.5%	12	11	-8.3%
Programs Attendance - Adult	65	117	80.0%	83	105	26.5%
Programs - Youth 12-18		0			0	
Programs Att - Youth 12-18		0			0	
Programs -Juvenile 6-11		1			2	
Programs Att -Juv 6-11		24			109	
Programs - Children 0-5		0			12	
Programs - Att - Children 0-5		0			61	
Outreach Activities		6			11	
Outreach Act. Attendance		44			38	
Public Training Sessions	2	0	-100.0%	3	0	-100.0%
Public Training Participants	2	0	-100.0%	3	0	-100.0%
Public Training Hours	2	0	-100.0%	3	0	-100.0%
Staff Training Sessions	0	0		69	0	-100.0%
Staff Training Participants		0		28	0	-100.0%
Staff Training Hours		0		58	0	-100.0%
Number of New Volunteers	0	0		0	0	
Number of Vol Hours	80	42	-48.1%	72	40	-44.4%
Meeting Room Use	90	11	-87.8%	83	8	-90.4%
Meeting Room Attendance	642	44	-93.1%	480	40	-91.7%
Number of Web Site Hits	16,273	13,486	-17.1%	16,380	12,282	-25.0%
Wi-Fi Users	394	313	-20.6%		244	
Wi-Fi Sessions	1,350	1,442	6.8%		907	
E Book Downloads	1,997	2,550	27.7%	1,981	2,603	31.4%
Flipster Uses	97	93	-4.1%	103	150	45.6%
Kanopy Uses	334	885	165.0%	330	844	155.8%
Ancestry.com Hits	524	335	-36.1%	435	173	-60.2%
		0				
		0				
Interlibrary Loans	47	0	-100.0%		0	
New Material Added	0	1,123		0	967	

**OCPL Budget 2020-2021 11-9-20**

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>Local Budget</b>					
010-206-30024-00000	Equip. Maintenance	2,450	2,500	102%	-50
010-206-30025-00000	Professional -Staffmark	110,000	38,732	35%	71,268
010-206-30041-00000	Telecommunications	1,000	304	30%	696
010-206-30056-00000	Data Processing	27,716	26,433	95%	1,283
010-206-30059-00000	Copier Click Charges - Xerox	10,000	1,388	14%	8,612
010-709-30068-00206	Advertising	700		0%	700
010-206-30080-00000	Dues	750		0%	750
010-206-30084-00000	School, Training, Sem.	3,300		0%	3,300
010-206-30090-00000	Honorarium	900	900	100%	0
010-206-33022-00207	Bldg Maint - Walhalla	7,000	2,495	36%	4,505
010-206-33022-00208	Bldg Maint - Seneca	3,600	1,310	36%	2,290
010-206-33022-00209	Bldg Maint - Westminster	2,500	1,690	68%	810
010-206-33022-00210	Bldg. Maint - Salem	2,020	1,230	61%	790
010-206-34043-00207	Electricity - Walhalla	27,000	7,845	29%	19,155
010-206-34043-00208	Electricity - Seneca	17,000	4,493	26%	12,507
010-206-34043-00209	Electricity - Westminster	15,500	3,394	22%	12,106
010-206-34043-00210	Electricity - Salem	5,000	5,000	100%	0
010-206-34044-00207	Water - Walhalla	1,400	371	27%	1,029
010-206-34044-00208	Water - Seneca	1,000	410	41%	590
010-206-34044-00209	Water - Westminster	1,000	191	19%	810
010-206-40031-00000	Sm Capital Equip (Loc)	2,800	796	28%	2,004
010-206-40032-00000	Operational	6,000	3,684	61%	2,316
010-206-40032-00000-A	Youth Services	2,000	329	16%	1,671
010-206-40033-00000	Postage	1,000		0%	1,000
010-206-40034-00000	Food	500		0%	500
010-206-40101-00000	Books (Local)	86,000	57,955	67%	28,045
010-206-40102-00000	Periodicals (Local)	22,200	21,198	95%	1,002
010-206-40103-00000	AV (Local)	11,300	7,439	66%	3,861
010-206-80206-00000	Automobile Maint - Library	1,500	306	20%	1,194
010-206-81206-00000	Gasoline - Library	2,500	728	29%	1,772
010-206-82206-00000	Diesel - Library	2,000	234	12%	1,766
<b>TOTAL LOCAL FUNDS</b>		<b>377,636</b>	<b>191,356</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>186,280</b>
<b>Misc. Funds</b>					
013-206-60010-00000	*Gifts, Donation (Loc)	30,933		0%	30,933
013-080-00805-11001	Nettles Trust	98,935		0%	98,935
<b>TOTAL MISC. FUNDS</b>					<b>129,868</b>
240-206-30056-00255	Data Processing (State)	\$7,766.00	5,227.00	67%	2,539.00
240-206-30080-00255	Dues (State)	\$500.00		0%	500.00
240-206-40031-00255	Sm Capital (State)	\$7,000.00		0%	7,000.00
240-206-40032-00255	Operational (State)	\$15,000.00	678.26	5%	14,321.74
240-206-40045-00255	IT Equipment	\$2,000.00		0%	2,000.00
240-206-40111-00255	Books (State)	\$70,816.00	4,094.45	6%	66,721.55
240-206-40112-00255	Periodicals (State)	\$28,864.00	11,715.60	41%	17,148.40
240-206-40113-00255	AV (State)	\$16,600.00	15.98	0%	16,584.02
<b>Total State Aid Funds</b>		<b>\$148,546.00</b>	<b>21,731.29</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>126,814.71</b>



**Oconee County Public Library Board of Trustees Meetings,  
2021 Calendar Year**

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

Tuesday, July 27, 2021

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

November 23, 2021



## Oconee County Public Library 2021 Holidays

<b>Friday, January 1</b>	<b>New Year's Day</b>
<b>Monday, January 18</b>	<b>MLK Jr. Day</b>
<b>Monday, February 15</b>	<b>Presidents Day</b>
<b>Friday, April 3- Sunday, April 5</b>	<b>In-service/Easter</b>
<b>Monday, May 10</b>	<b>Conf. Memorial Day</b>
<b>Saturday, May 29- Monday, May 31</b>	<b>Memorial Day</b>
<b>Monday, July 5-</b>	<b>Independence Day</b>
<b>Saturday, Sept. 4- Monday, Sept. 6</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>
<b>Monday, October 12</b>	<b>In-service</b>
<b>Thursday, Nov. 11</b>	<b>Veterans Day</b>
<b>Thursday, Nov. 25- Sunday, Nov. 29</b>	<b>Thanksgiving</b>
<b>Friday, Dec. 24- Tuesday, Dec 28</b>	<b>Christmas Holiday</b>

## **Bookmobile and Outreach Services September/October 2020**

### **Brenda Lee, Bookmobile and Outreach Services**

The Bookmobile Manager continued to make deliveries in Library van, sending checked out items for curbside pickup at another branch, and readying requests for curbside pickup by patrons.

Blair Hinson, Library Director, and I took the Bookmobile to Dollar General in Salem and Ingles in West Union in September to help with the 2020 Census.

- Returns are quarantined for at least 72 hours before checking in.
- Check in returned items and Items in transit.
- Continue to clean and sanitize as needed; cleaning returned items as necessary.
- Sort materials on designated carts; shelve on Bookmobile; remove older items.
- Continue to order per schedule.

Transition of Bookmobile statistics to Excel spreadsheet 2017-2018 is complete, as well as up to date with 2020-2021 fiscal year statistics.

No patrons are allowed access to the bookmobile. It is a very different experience to set up a table outside with patrons' requests already checked out and ready to pick up, limiting actual contact. (Returns are kept separated and quarantined for at least 3 days before being cleared from accounts.)

99% of the processing takes place in my office prior to wherever the day takes me. This is a more difficult way to operate, but it is the most efficient during this time. Keeping staff, volunteers, and the patrons safe is our ultimate goal while still providing a level of quality service to the public. Worth repeating, I miss the operations of the Bookmobile the way they were...however, I am very grateful to be of service in any capacity.

We have wonderful patrons, many of whom entirely rely on me to fill their needs. It has felt overwhelming at times, but I find pacing myself and not promising what I can't deliver make all the difference. Life is good. 😊

**Branch Services Narrative  
Sept/Oct 2020**

**Sue Andrus**

**Policy and Procedure Changes**

**Evaluation Process Evaluated**

As a result of the change in the annual evaluation form used by the county, we're considering modification of how the library evaluates staff. This involves identifying the most essential duties in the position description and weighting their importance, having staff members and their supervisors set goals for every quarter, and meeting to discuss progress toward those goals during each quarter.

This should create a thorough record of staff performance throughout the year. It will also allow staff to make course corrections well in advance of their evaluation.

**Procedures modified**

Due to the change in service hours at Walhalla, opening procedures for Tuesday and Wednesday mornings were altered to accommodate the cleaning usually done after 4pm.

**Providing Library Services During Pandemic**

Service hours for Walhalla and Seneca were extended to 6pm on Mondays, 6pm on Tuesdays (Walhalla), and 6pm on Thursdays (Seneca). We received comments from many patrons who are thankful that they can use the library after 5pm now.

**Staffing Issues**

Our new Technology Services Librarian, Michael Metzger, started in October. The on-boarding process here at OCPL has been standardized so by the end of his first week, we'd covered many important tasks and began learning our cataloging system with the assistance of Bethany Culp. By the end of his first three months he will be our OverDrive manager.



### **Covid-19 Pandemic procedures:**

We are letting patrons scan their own library cards and books when they checkout unless they are picking up holds in that case we can scan the books for checkout. We also hold items back three days before we check them in. In addition, we sanitize the library and public computers on a regular basis. The county still requires that our patrons wear masks' because of the ordinance that past which requires masks to be worn in public buildings.

### **Salem programs**

Because of the Covid-19 Pandemic we have changed how we can do programs. Since, we can no longer do in person programs, we now have kids and adult craft kits that can be given away at our branch. Kayla makes the kids craft projects that kids can take home. Leah Price makes the adult craft kits that can be taken home. Darcy has also provided some craft kits.

Also we are changing how Salem provides the Adult programs. Salem now is offering digital based programs for our patrons. We have switched the book club so that it is now done over Zoom. We also had a Fall for Planting program that Clemson Extension Agent Kerrie Roach put on for us in October. In addition, we now have a Recipe Exchange Club which is done with email. Patrons submit recipes via email then I send them back out via email. We had our first batch of recipes to go out in October.

### **Salem Collection Development**

All through the pandemic Salem was still working at ordering quality new items for our branch. During September and October we worked hard to spend our money on the best items we could get for our patrons. We continue to order well reviewed items for the Salem branch. By having a good collection development strategy, we can keep the demand up for circulation at the Salem Library. This has also been a time when we could weed our collection. We have just about finished weeded every collection in the library. This helps to make items more accessible to patrons.

### **Volunteers**

Right now Sally Bouwman is our only current volunteer. Due to the Covid-19 virus we are continuing to not have any volunteers in the library even though we were have reopened to the public. We will be looking for another active Volunteer for our branch. We are currently doing okay without our volunteer, if the Covid-19 situation improves we may bring Sally back.

## Seneca Library Branch Narrative, September/October 2020

**Emily Whitmire Sluder, Branch Manager**

### **Facilities:**

*This part is the same as the last several reports:*

The Roads and Bridges director has given us one quote on resurfacing the parking lot. The county requires two more quotes before we can move forward with scheduling this. We have no word on when we might be receiving more quotes.

We have reached out to the county administrator and the facilities maintenance director for an update on when the process for scheduling a new roof installation can begin. Since our original request, we have seen more leaks in the ceiling. **This is still the case as of the beginning of November. We have to cover a section of bookshelves with plastic tarp before a predicted storm.**

I have asked for curbs to be installed in the first parking places that are next to the sidewalk, after someone's car rolled into one of the crepe myrtles and someone who parked a motorcycle in one of the spaces drove over the sidewalk instead of reversing to leave. I have asked for the parking lot lines to be repainted, at least in the middle spaces, as people park in "non-spaces" since they cannot see the lines. Unfortunately, we have not been able to do this due to the possibility of getting the entire lot resurfaced. I will ask about it again in July.

*\*\*\* New information from the beginning of September, from my last report:*

Blair has left a message for the Roads and Bridges director to ask about painting the parking lot lines and getting the curb bumpers if we can't get the whole lot resurfaced at this time.

Blair has spoken with the director of Facilities Maintenance regarding a timeline for the new roof. The director said he would work on this, but we have not heard back yet. **This is still the case as of the beginning of November.**

\*\*\*

Everyone is still scanning their cards and materials in front of the desk. We are very pleased with not having to handle everyone's card and taking their books from them to scan when checking out. We have not had any curbside patrons since the beginning of October. We are very grateful that the county has a mask ordinance, and we hope it will continue as long as possible. There are a handful of people who refuse to wear a mask, but other than that most people are compliant.

People love the take home crafts we are giving out.

**Collections:** The long-anticipated study rooms have been assembled and added to the former spot where the Inspirational shelf was located. We shifted Juvenile and Young Adult to make room to remove one of the Young Adult shelves. The Inspirational collection was moved to the low shelves with the magazine boxes. We shifted The magazine boxes were moved to carts (temporarily) on the sides of the low shelves.

**Staffing:** Our Palmetto Youth employee will be leaving at the end of November. We hired a new part-time employee to replace the one who left in September. Everything is working out well.

**Statistics: Visits to Library:** September- 3418; October- 3280

**New borrowers:** September-43; October-48 **Total Volunteers:** 1; **Volunteer Hours:** N/A; **ILL:** N/A

# TECHNICAL SERVICES

OCT/ NOV 2020

Michael Metzger  
Technical Services Librarian

## Introduction

Just wanted to start by introducing myself. My name is Michael Metzger. I am new to the Oconee County Public Library. I come from the Rabun County Public Library just across the river in Georgia. I worked there for almost five years and obtained my Master of Library and Information Science degree while working there. I love this region and was very excited when the opportunity to become part of the nearby Oconee County Public Library presented itself. I started in this position on October 12<sup>th</sup>. So far, it has been a great experience. The staff and community have been very welcoming. I truly love this area. I have enjoyed getting to know my coworkers. I am still learning a lot about the Library, and the collections and services that it offers. I look forward to continuing the development of our digital collections and media; as well as, adding or improving any other services to help better serve the communities of Oconee County.

## Collections:

- Have begun to purchase titles on overdrive with our remaining credit of \$1,072.82.
- Assessing usage of current titles in Flipster to see if there are any to be weeded or added.

## TLC:

- I am currently editing and moving Marc records for our Overdrive titles into TLC, so that patrons can see our digital titles when they search our catalog. This has not been done in about a year so there are a lot of titles; some however, are about to expire. Right now I am starting with the most recent purchased titles and working my way back. I do not plan on moving ones that will expire in less than three months to the catalog.

## Manager's Projects:

- Discussion about the switch to Cloud Library as our ebook platform continue. We are looking at a possibly starting with Cloud Library in mid-December and keeping Overdrive through the remainder of our licensing agreement at the end of the fiscal year. This will allow a period of time for patrons to familiarize themselves with a new app and platform, instead of having to switch unexpectedly, which can be very frustrating for users.

## Staff Development:

- I am still completing the boarding process, I have become comfortable with cataloging and managing our digital collection with overdrive and am beginning to focus on the remaining digital content- Kanopy, Flipster, Discus, and knowledge city.

## Issues:

- Nothing to report at this time.

# Walhalla Library

September/October 2020

Quientell Walker, Branch Manager

## Narrative

### Oconee History Museum:

We are still collaborating with the Oconee History Museum. This collaboration is to aid in sharing and providing access to materials in our collections that are irreplaceable. The library is scanning the materials, indexing when necessary, and making print copies for the library and museum collection. When permissible the Oconee History Museum will upload the completed scans to their website. At this time there is not a set timetable for completion. Here is a list of the current projects at this time:

Title of Project	Number of items scanned	Notes
Akachee 1925	108 items scanned	Completed
Westminster HS 1951	18 items scanned	Work in progress
Westminster HS 1952	19 items scanned	Work in progress
Westminster HS 1953	22 items scanned	Work in progress
Westminster HS 1954	22 items scanned	Work in progress
Westminster HS 1955	22 items scanned	Work in progress
Westminster HS 1957	24 items scanned	Work in progress
Westminster HS 1960	48 items scanned	Work in progress

### Seneca High School Project:

In August the Walhalla Library was contacted by a Seneca High School teacher to assist with an upcoming assignment about the history of Seneca. After speaking with the teacher it was decided that it would be best to contact the Seneca and Walhalla museums for further assistance. In short, the students would be required to write a paper on one of the assignment topics, for example the Founding of Seneca, and give a presentation. However, due to COVID-19 access to research material is very limited. For example, the Seneca museums are closed to the public and the Historical Collection at the Walhalla Library is restricted. Yet, the library decided it would be best to gather what can be found into a LibGuide. Both the museums and the library agreed that we each receive the same questions about area history, but that we each lack a ready to use information source. This LibGuide will function as a reusable and updateable resource for genealogy and local history. Work began in gathering the information starting in September, and work is expected to continue until about December.

**OverDrive Collection:**

The OverDrive collection is still receiving a high level of use from our patrons. Below are the monthly OverDrive statistics.

	September 2019	September 2020	October 2019	October 2020
Unique Users	602	<b>686</b>	613	<b>677</b>
Total Checkouts	1,977	<b>2,550</b>	1,981	<b>2,603</b>

**Programs:**

The Westminster Branch has provided Adult Craft Kits to the Walhalla Branch. The kits have been successful.

**Facilities:**

**August 18, 2020:** Two of the parking lot lights are blinking, but they have not gone out at this time. Attached is a photo of the two that are blinking. **Resolved.**

**September 10, 2020:** Blair informed me that he found a condensation issue in the attic. He noticed that condensation was forming underneath the drip pan and on the pipes. This condensation has been making its way through the vent in the SC Room. Blair wants to know if the pipes can be insulated? **Resolved.**

**Statistics:**

Category	September 2020	October 2020
Visits to library	2,782	2,301
New Cards Issued	50	50
ILL	0	0

## Branch Narrative for September and October 2020

### Facilities

The water heater reached the end of its life and had to be replaced by facilities maintenance.

Tropical Storm Zeta caused closures and delays for the county and the library. Upon reopening, the internet and PAC computers would not connect. After the second day IT arrived and fixed the problem with a simple unplugging. There were also several small limbs and branches, as well as leaves down all over the place. Facilities came on the fourth day to clean those up.

### Services

Curbside continues to be used and continues to run smoothly.

### Curbside Stats

September	October
6	5

Keeping in trend with many other library systems, we launched a system-wide adult Take and Make Craft Kit program. The crafts are selected by Leah Price with the staff of the Westminster branch working together to create the kits that are sent out to the branches. Each Monday a new craft is made available on a first come first served basis.

92 kids' crafts were taken in September and October.

September	Westminster	System-wide
Marker Water Color	16	50
Magnet Bookmark	14	55
Pipe cleaner Bird Feeder	9	50
<b>October</b>		
Yarn Pumpkin	13	50
Button Pumpkin	12	46
Hedgehog paper bookmark	5	46
Veteran's Day Thanks You Kits	13	58

**Youth Services Department**  
**September - October 2020**  
**Darcy Arnall, Youth Services Librarian**

### **Collection Development**

Our Literacy Kits for the early grades are still very popular, and we realized that we needed to add more Orange kits (targeted for first graders) which circulate heavily. DJ has assembled 17 more kits, which will be cataloged soon and begin circulating. Darcy is also working on new storytime kits for the Westminster Library using funds donated in memory of Joy Moore. We have bought the supplies for 10 new kits using those funds, and we will be assembling and cataloging them soon.

### **Collaboration**

From October to December, OCPL is working with the South Carolina State Library on a food literacy grant from the Network of the National Library of Medicine. Youth Services will be creating two programs in the next couple of months focusing on health and fitness to fulfill the grant requirements. Darcy also attended virtual First Steps meetings in September and October.

### **Staff Development**

For several weeks in October, Darcy has been attending webinars from the SC State Library on Basic American Sign Language for Library Staff. In September, Darcy, Sue, and DJ made some changes DJ's job description. Her title has now been officially changed to Youth Services Assistant, and her job description has been changed to more accurately reflect her day-to-day responsibilities.

### **Community Outreach**

Around the beginning of the school year, OCPL received some hotspots for education from the SC State Library. Blair tried to contact SDOC to distribute the hotspots to students, but the school system did not seem to be interested. So, Darcy reached out to a few media specialists and teachers in Oconee County that she knew did not have internet access at home. We loaned hotspots to three teachers through the end of the semester, and we plan to continue loaning them to people in our local education community who need them.

A few months ago, a couple of the local preschool directors expressed a desire to resume librarian visits at their facilities. Starting in September, Darcy began visiting the Pennsylvania Children's Center in Tamassee once per month. We hope to add more preschool visits in the coming months as the centers feel comfortable accepting outside visitors.

### **Programs**

We are continuing to offer virtual storytime every week on Facebook, although views are dropping. Starting in September, Darcy changed the format of virtual storytime from one pre-recorded video uploaded to Facebook to a Virtual Storytime Room in Google Slides (see below). The virtual storytime room is full of links to book readings, songs, and rhyme videos on YouTube which can be accessed by clicking on the images on the slide. For the first few weeks, this new format was reasonably popular based on Facebook engagement numbers, but as with most things on the Internet, its novelty wore off after a few weeks. After looking at the engagement statistics for September and

October, Darcy is planning to change the format again in November to hopefully make this content more appealing to our patrons.



On a more exciting note, beginning in October, Youth Services began offering weekly in-person outdoor storytimes at our Walhalla and Seneca branches. Both libraries have good green spaces adjacent to the buildings, so we marked out socially-distanced spots for families on the lawn and offered 30-minute programs including stories, songs, rhymes, and movement activities. We held 7 in-person storytimes in October which were attended by 53 people. On a couple of occasions at the Walhalla Library, the weather was not cooperative, and we moved storytime inside to the children's area. Because we have moved almost all of the furniture into the meeting room, there is enough space in Walhalla's children's area to spread families out reasonably well. We have received very positive feedback from patrons about the outdoor storytimes, and we are planning to continue them as long as we can. When the weather cools off in the winter, we will try to hold weekly storytimes inside at Walhalla and Seneca because they both have adequate children's spaces for programming.

Because we have started offering some in-person programming again, our virtual offerings have dropped off some over the last couple of months. We also noticed that attendance was falling off, which may be partially due to the fact that school has started back and the kids have other things to occupy their time. Our most successful recent virtual program was our Science @ Home video. We filmed a short demonstration of an Elephant Toothpaste experiment which had 47 one-minute views on Facebook. We have plans to try some more science experiment videos since the first one was successful.

### **Summer Reading**

On October 27<sup>th</sup>, Darcy attended the virtual Summer Reading Wrap-Up meeting hosted by the State Library to discuss this year's results and ideas for next summer. Darcy has begun contacting performers and brainstorming programming ideas for Summer 2021, although planning for next year will be difficult due to continued uncertainties surrounding the pandemic. We will try to have adaptable plans for next year's summer reading so that we can adjust as needed based on pandemic restrictions.