

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****October 20, 2020**

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SUBJECT: FORT WORTH PUBLIC LIBRARY COVID-19 OPERATIONS

The purpose of this Informal Report is to give an update on the Library's operations and services since COVID-19 related closures occurred on March 13, 2020. Library staff were prepared to anticipate new customer needs and adapt quickly because of an increased focus on customer-centered services that began in 2019 with the implementation of a new Strategic Services Plan.

Staff were encouraged to be nimble and flexible as library buildings closed and customer needs evolved. The Library amplified existing digital services, accelerated implementation of planned initiatives, and innovated in ways not previously considered:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| March - April | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expanded the digital collection with more e-book and e-audiobook options• Shifted traditional programs, such as storytime, to social media platforms• Began new interactive reading initiatives such as the Stay at Home Bookclub |
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Began offering curbside service at five libraries so customers could pick up and return materials• Established new community partnerships for online programming |
| June | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expanded curbside service to all libraries (except Cambridge Court)• Reopened seven libraries for limited service, including browsing, material checkout and computer use |
| August | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opened new Golden Triangle Branch Library for limited service |

It is clear that Fort Worth residents need and want their libraries during this difficult time. The demand for services that inform, engage, inspire and empower continues to grow. Since March, customers:

- Checked out 33% more e-books and e-audiobooks than last year
- Opened 7,000 new library cards
- Checked out 1.2 million items
- Visited libraries 60,000 times since they reopened in June
- Made 36,000 curbside transactions to pick up materials
- Participated in online programs and classes for all ages (5,600 participants)

Fort Worth Public Library is the only large library system in Texas open for regular service. San Antonio Public Library is allowing residents inside by appointment for computer use only. Dallas, Austin, Houston, Harris County, and El Paso only offer curbside service.



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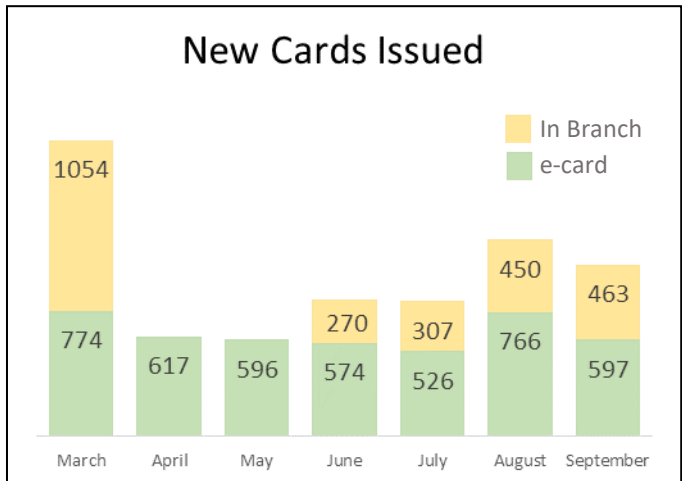
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Library Customers Shift to Online Services

E-cards

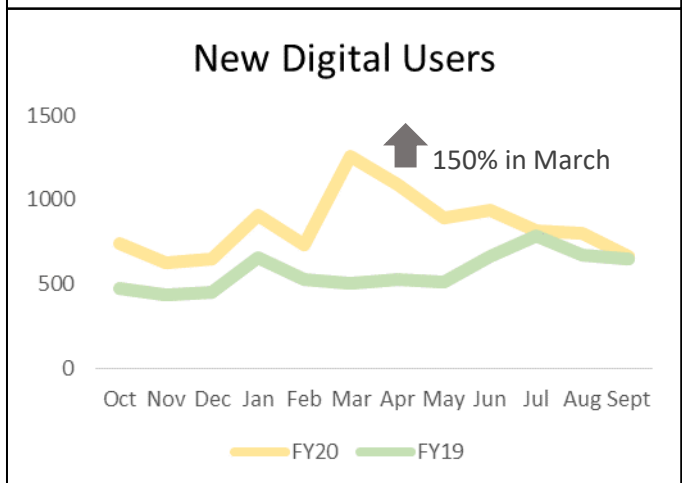
The Library issued 4,450 e-cards from March-September.

This contactless service allows residents to register for and receive a library card online.



Digital Users

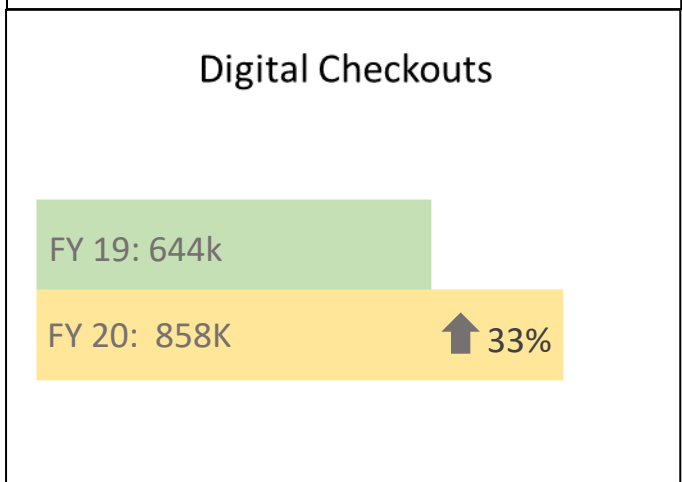
New digital users spiked in the first few months of the pandemic.



Digital Books & Audiobooks

Digital usage did not decline, even after branches began reopening for curbside and limited service.

By June, the number of digital checkouts had already exceeded FY19 numbers. We ended the year with 33% more digital checkouts.





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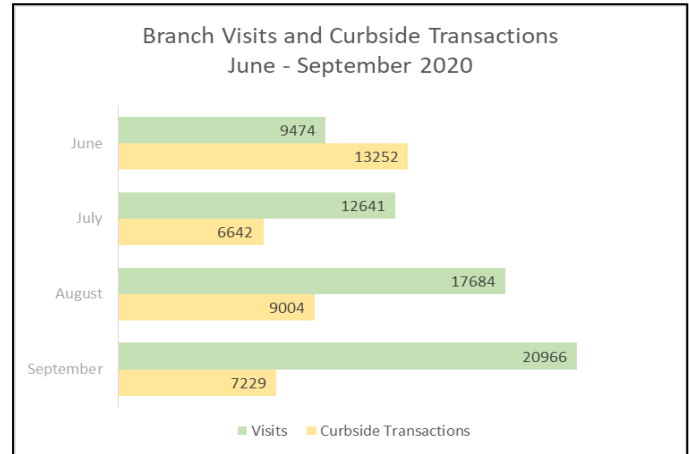
Library Visits and Curbside Transactions

Maximizing Access

For a period of 66 days, libraries were closed and customers were without access to physical materials.

On May 19, five locations began offering curbside pickup. In June, seven locations reopened for limited service.

With the addition of Golden Triangle, eight locations provide limited service and the remaining seven offer curbside service. Residents continue to tell us that they want their libraries open.

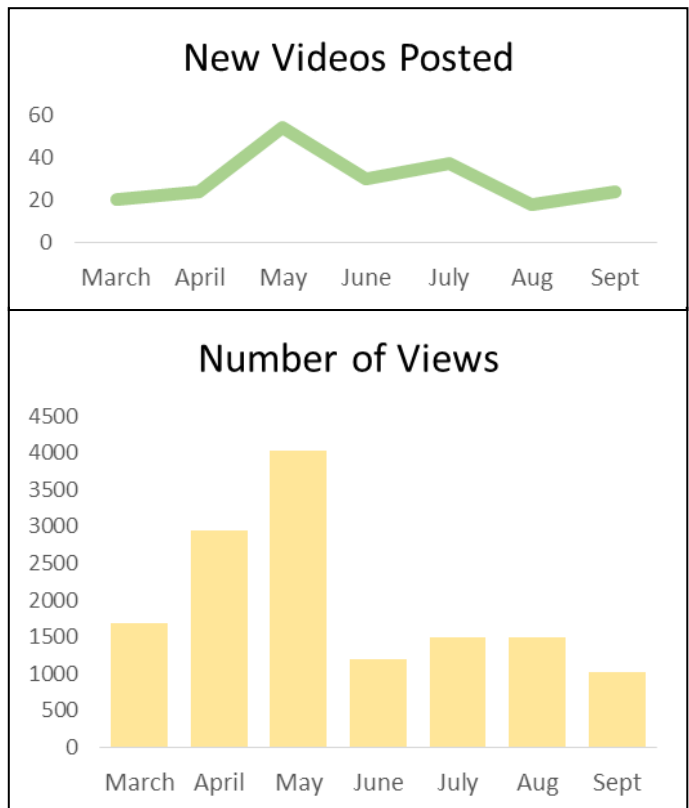


Virtual Programming on Social Media

Library programming has changed but not slowed since March. Under the umbrella of the Library's strategic goal of "building a community of learners, dreamers, and doers", staff began working from home to offer live or recorded programs on social media platforms.

Since mid-March, 207 videos have been viewed 67,950 times for a total of 1,521 hours.

This approach allows participants flexibility to view at their convenience rather than set schedules. The success of this seamless engagement with our audience suggests online programming has staying power to continue as a service into the future even after all libraries reopen.





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Adult Programming

Expansion of Adult Programming

Since March 14, 447 hours of virtual programming has been provided for adults, most being live and interactive. Many were collaborations with existing and new community partnerships.

Program Highlights

Stay At Home Bookclub: 437 members and 21+ books read since March

Juneteenth & Hispanic Heritage:

Partnership with the CFW Diversity & Inclusion department to develop meaningful cultural programming.

Dementia Care: Partnership with James L. West Center for Dementia Care brought nationally recognized Teepa Snow to discuss memory loss, dementia, and COVID, and 497 people attended five lectures.

Spanish High School Equivalency

Classes: the only Spanish-language HSE or GED class in Tarrant County. This class was featured in a [CBS-11 article](#).

"Once I get my equivalency diploma, I can say that I fulfilled my goal. In this I will have doubled my potential to move forward. It provides access to open doors and can represent the beginning of a new career." --High School Equivalency student

Participation by Program Category

Books and Reading	944
Arts and Culture	994
Community Vitality	1,012
Education and Growth	1,422

Program Partners

Google*
 Hear Fort Worth*
 James L. West Center for Dementia Care*
 Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas*
 SCORE Fort Worth
 Texas A&M University School of Law
 Texas Parks and Wildlife*

Code Compliance Department
 Diversity and Inclusion Department*
 Economic Development Department*
 Human Resources Department*
 Log Cabin Village (PARD)

** New partner since March 2020*



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Youth Programming

Transitioning to Virtual

As soon as library locations closed in March, the youth programming team began working to transition popular youth programs such as story time and children's crafts to an online format.

The team posted 12 programs on social media in May. By July and August, they were posting between 30 and 37 online programs per month. Attendance grew to 375 families. Since May the team has provided 137 programs with 1,422 total participants.

Toddler and Preschool Storytime

Programs: When the Library began offering curbside service, families were able to pick up a craft sack filled with materials to make the crafts that accompanied that month's weekly storytime program.

Early Learning (Resources for

Parents): Help me Grow, Teach my Child Math, Teach My Child to Read

Spanish Language Programming:

Storytime, Kinder 101, Book talks, Library Tutorials

Pre-teen, Teen Programs: Dungeons & Dragons online game

Upcoming Live Videos

MAKER SHOWCASE

OCT 10	Maker Showcase for October Saturday at 12:00 PM	☆ Get Reminder
OCT 12	Let's Create: Pre-K Story Time for... October 12 at 8:00 AM	☆ Get Reminder
OCT 13	The Learn Dream Do Show Ep. 7 -... October 13 at 8:00 AM	☆ Get Reminder

Fort Worth Public Library
September 7

It's all about letters on this week's story time!
Join Ms. Kim as she takes us on a journey through the alphabet and makes learning about letters fun!

17 7 Comments 9 Shares 538 Views

Like Comment Share

Program Partners

Amon Carter Museum
BRIT
Carlos Saenz*
Cinco Books
FW Nature Center*
Help Me Grow
Johnson Space Center*
Leadership ISD*
Log Cabin Village
Perot Museum

* New partner since March 2020

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This winter, the library will reopen the remaining seven locations for limited service. The Library is making plans to return to full hours & days, in-house programming, and facility rental in the first half of 2021. Library services will resume according to the following plan:

Milestone 1: Expand limited service at all regional and branch locations

Milestone 2: Begin offering limited service at the Central Library (first floor only)

Milestone 3: Increase community engagement, both virtually and in person

Milestone 4: Expand service to regular hours and days

Milestone 5: Resume in-building programming

Milestone 6: Resume facility rentals

I am extremely proud of the work and services the Fort Worth Public Library has delivered since mid-March. They have shown a commitment to the community by adapting quickly, innovating with staying power, being responsive to the needs of the community; always with the library's vision as the guiding force, "Your community gathering place for learning, self-discovery, shared experiences, and personal growth."

If you have any questions on this report please contact Manya Shorr, Director, Fort Worth Public Library, at 817-392-7706 or manya.shorr@fortworthtexas.gov.

David Cooke
City Manager