



DOWNTOWN LIBRARY
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RAPIDCITYLIBRARY.ORG



Date: November 8, 2021
To: RCPL Board of Trustees
From: Sam Slocum, Senior Librarian
Re: 3rd Quarter Statistics

Summary: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, safety precautions such as requiring face masks, quarantining materials, and restrictions on the number of people able to attend events and occupy meeting rooms were implemented in 2020. For the safety of the community, use of the drive-thru and virtual services were heavily promoted during the third quarter of 2020 which is the time period to which this report compares. As a consequence of these precautions and a general change in the community's behavior, many of the library statistics are fluctuating.

During the third quarter of 2021, visitor entries, patron contacts, notaries, database access, electronic access, circulation, and library events increased compared to the same period in 2020. There were decreases in drive-thru use and event attendance.

Library Services

Entry to the library increased 36% over the same period in 2020 but has still not reached pre-COVID levels. The Pop-Up library had over 1,000 visitors between July and September. Drive-thru use decreased 53% with 2,780 patrons using drive-thru services during the third quarter compared to 5,901 the previous year. Drive-thru use has still significantly increased compared to pre-COVID time.

Overall, patron contacts were up including the areas of Adult Services, Children's Services, Local History Room, and Circulation. Virtual patron contacts decreased 23% which was expected with the reopening of the library and increase of in-person services. The reinstatement of one-on-one library services saw a dramatic increase in notaries with 775 performed during the third quarter. Library staff answered over 2,000 virtual questions via phone, email, and text.

Use of library databases increased by 17% and we had over 12,000 visits to the new library website. Electronic access increased 55% with over 5,000 hours of computer use and 57,255 hours of wireless internet use.

Collections

Checkouts of library materials increased 22% over the third quarter.

Public Awareness and Customer Relations

The library held a total of 116 virtual and in-person events with 3,930 attendees. The overall number of events increased by 1%, however, event attendance decreased by 6% compared to the same quarter last year. There were over 30,000 social networking engagements via Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest for promotion and education.