

*Connection. Collaboration. Creativity.*

## GOOD NEWS: A letter from the WPLF



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### **Much needed positive feedback**

Recently we sent out a request asking you to update your personal information and asked, "Why do you love your Library." We were overwhelmed by the response. After only a week, we have already received 45 library loving tales. Be assured that we will share your thoughts with our library staff, and these messages will give them just the boost they might need working in a public library during a pandemic. You are the reason we are here. As I celebrate my first full year with the Library Foundation, I would like to thank you for reminding me why my job is so very necessary. Below are two quotes that represent common themes.

*Reading is an integral part of my life. Now with the pandemic, it's an essential part of life. Reading has broadened my world and helped me understand others better. **Judi***

*I have been a lover of books all of my life and became an elementary school librarian to instill that love in children. I will be 83 years old this summer, and reading is still my favorite pastime! **Jeanette***

### **Libraries provide access during COVID-19**

On March 17, the Wichita Public Library system transitioned quickly from in-person to remote services because of its Continuity of Operations Plan. The Library was able to keep limited staffing for telephone reference, issuing e-library cards, and materials returns compared with peer institutions that had closed returns and kept all staff out of buildings. Wichita was even able to offer curbside and window service by May 11, directly following the end of the state's stay-at-home orders.

Beginning May 26, all Wichita library locations reopened for limited service for public computing and for customers to come inside to collect holds, use Wi-Fi, or request items from the shelves brought to them by staff. Only about 20% of the nation's public libraries have been able to do the same.



Meanwhile, Library staff have done extraordinary work during the pandemic.

--Materials selectors continue to oversee the expansion of virtual branch resources that now include both digital magazines and audiobooks.

--The youth services team converted traditional summer reading programs into an online program that began May 1, nearly one month ahead of regular scheduling. Through the first two months of the program, children and teens reported reading more than 1.1 million minutes as part of this literacy initiative.

--Technology trainers have offered technical assistance over the telephone and recently through socially distanced Book a Librarian training. The first step back to in-person programs will be computer classes with a limit of five students per session to ensure social distancing.

### **Introducing Cambry Schrag**

The Wichita Public Library Foundation is pleased to announce the addition of Cambry Schrag as a development associate. Originally from Pratt, Cambry graduated from Kansas State University and moved to Wichita three years ago to begin her career in the nonprofit sector. She has been with the Foundation part-time since November and recently accepted the full-time position after graduating with her master's degree in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management from Wichita State University.

Cambry is eager to get started making a difference. "What I am most excited about in my new role is working with potential and current Foundation supporters and grant writing. Through this work, I hope to grow the capacity of the Foundation to fund Library programs, including children's literacy, e-collections, and updating existing library collections."

### **Did you know? Big Read: Wichita is happening**

The NEA's Big Read has become an annual literary tradition in south-central Kansas in which the Library partners with area organizations to read and discuss a single book. This year's selection is "Circe," a fictional dive into Greek mythology by Madeline Miller. Events are scheduled from Oct. 1-Nov. 15, with a kick-off on Sept. 26. Big Read: Wichita 2020 is funded by a maximum-amount grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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*The mission of the Wichita Public Library Foundation is to fund Library operational needs directly benefiting the public and not covered in the tax supported budget. The mission directs the activities of the Foundation through private fundraising, Foundation, individual and corporate grants and annual endowment distributions to the Library.*