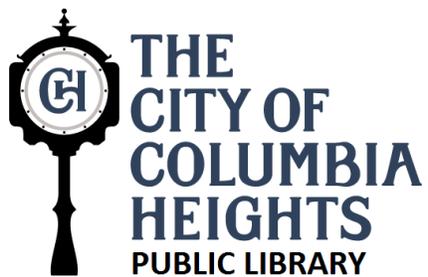


COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



A message from the
LIBRARY DIRECTOR

February 2018

Mayor
Members of Council
Library Board
Citizens of Columbia Heights

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The staff of the Columbia Heights Public Library come to work every day to pursue our vision for the future: to be a center of the community where services and collaborative programs are available and partnerships thrive. The following report illustrates many of the ways that library staff served a diverse community's needs for access to resources, information, and technology in a welcoming environment in the past year.

In 2017 the library welcomed 123,947 visitors to a beautifully-designed new building at the heart of Central Avenue. Visits grew 20% over 2015, the last full year in the 40th Avenue location. Visitors borrowed 123,812 items, a 13% increase over 2015.

The library partnered with:

- Independent School District 13's Early Childhood and Family Education program to build parent capacity to nurture children's early literacy at Baby Read, Baby Grow classes;
- The Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging to build the digital literacy of seniors through introductory computer classes;
- YouthPrise to offer nutritional lunches to area youth at risk of going hungry during the summer when free and reduced price school lunches are unavailable;
- University of Minnesota Extension to offer a 4-H experience relevant for urban kids;
- Anoka County and the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers to offer Open to Business counseling to new and prospective business owners; and
- Over 50 volunteers to provide opportunities for individuals to build employability, meet neighbors, and give back to their community.

If you came to the library in 2017 to check out a book or movie, to attend a class or storytime, to read to a dog, to use a computer, to hold a meeting, to study, to work, or to transform your life, we thank you!

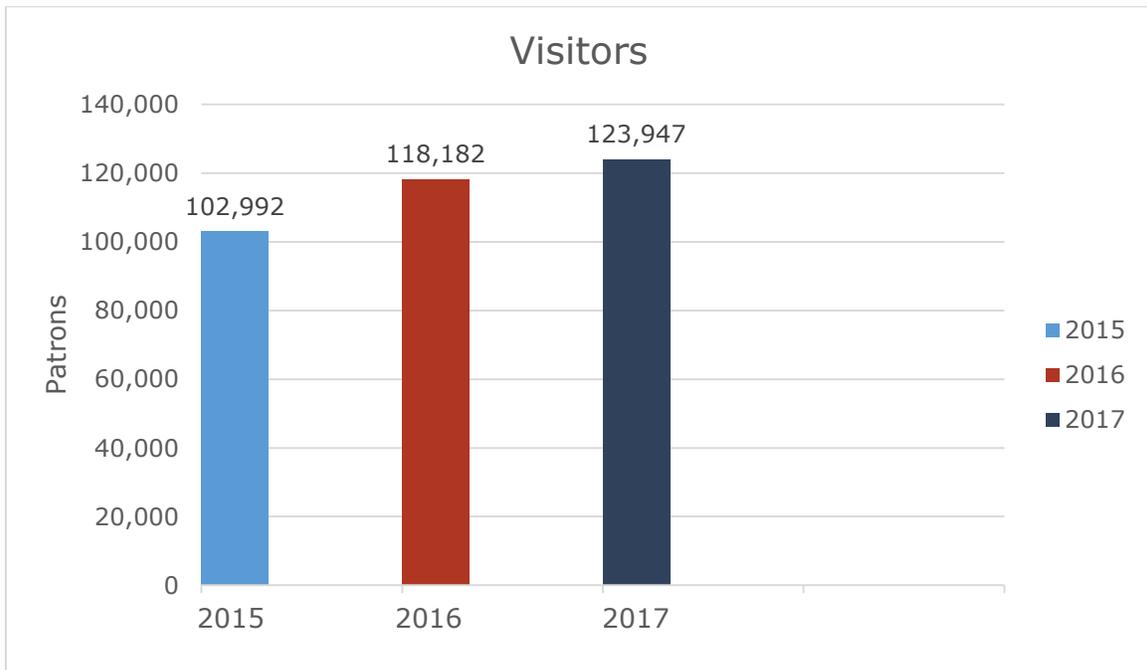
Sincerely,

Renee Dougherty
Library Director

LIBRARY USE

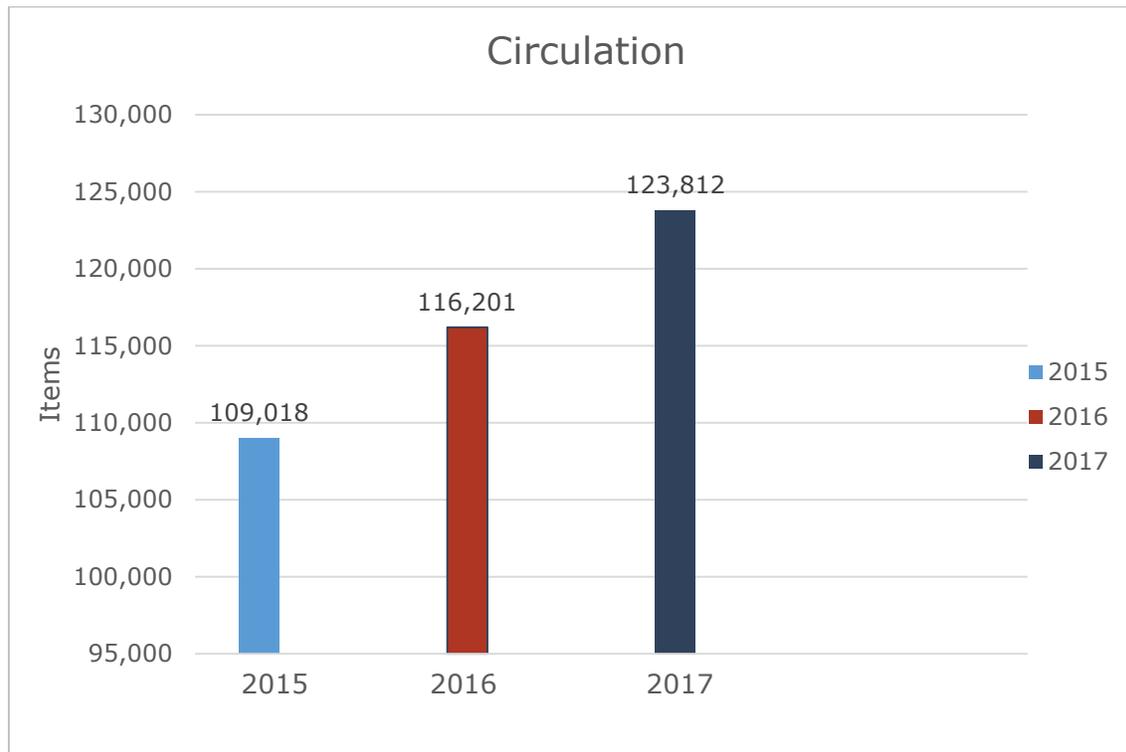
Visitors

During 2017, 123,947 people visited the library. Visits increased 4.8% over 2016, the grand opening of the new building, and 20% over 2015, the last full year in the 40th Avenue location. The City Council’s decision to construct a comfortable, attractive, resource-rich library on Central Avenue has resulted in a tremendous boost in use of the library. Many visitors seek access to the internet and computer resources. Others seek safe and comfortable spaces to work, study, and collaborate with friends and neighbors. Use of library study and meeting rooms more than doubled from 1,412 instances in 2016 to 3,278 in 2017. Over 8,000 people attended a program at the library in 2017.



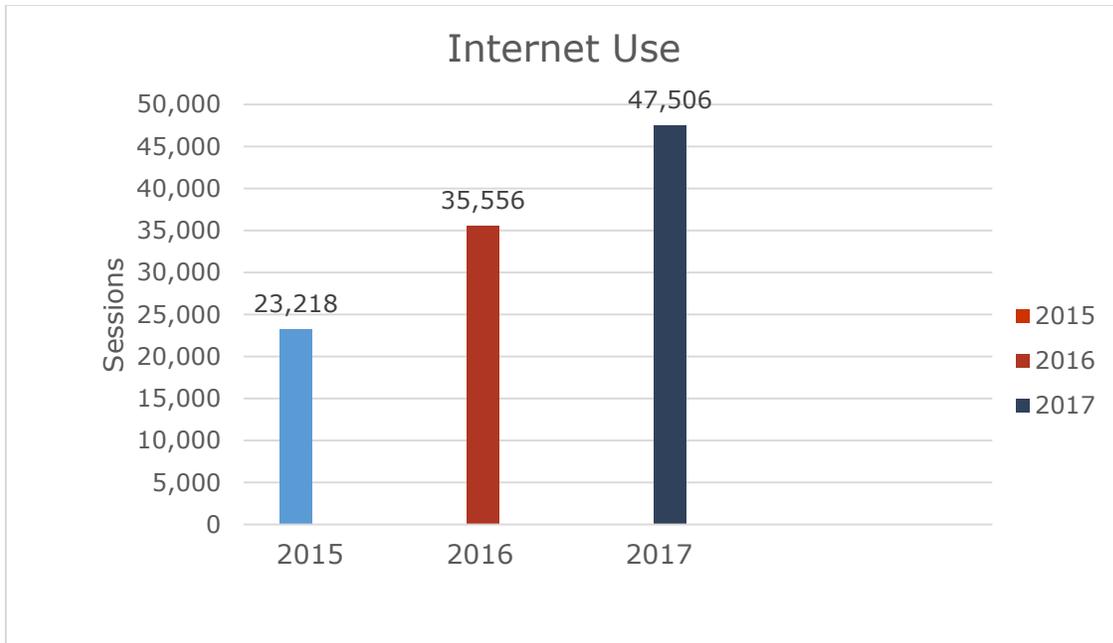
Circulation

Circulation of materials has also increased. A total of 123,812 items were borrowed in 2017, including books, e-books, downloadable audio books, magazines, music, and video discs. 2017 circulation increased 6.5% over 2016 and 13.5% over 2015 rates.



Computer Use

Use of library computers also increased. Computer sessions increased 33.6% when compared to 2015 and 104.6% when compared to 2015. Computer users spent a total of 1,225,225 minutes online in 2017, a 39% increase over 2016 and a 101% increase compared to 2015. The increases are due in part to tripling the number of computers available for public use.



SERVICE TO ADULTS

Cortni O'Brien, Adult Services Librarian

Lifelong Learning

The Adult Services department strives to create lifelong learning opportunities based on the changing needs and interests of our community. Through our print and digital collections, educational programs, literacy programs, and online resources, we inspire the members of the Columbia Heights Public Library community to learn something new every day.

In addition to our ever-evolving library materials collections, the adult services department areas of focus can be summarized as follows: Literacy and Reading programs, Arts, History and Cultural Heritage programs, and Outreach.

Literacy and Reading

Author Events: This year was a banner year for author events at Columbia Heights Public Library. The library hosted 13 authors in 2017! Thirty adults attended the “Sisters in Crime” mystery writers’ panel discussion in February. One attendee said, “It was super fun! These gals are amazing. Now I want to read all their books.” Other visiting authors included Midge Bubany, Vince Wyckoff, Sue Leaf, Pat Stinson, Nathan Roberts, Barb Saefke, Chad Lewis, and JP Johnson.

Winter Reads: Winter Reads, a Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) sponsored adult reading program held throughout January and February, encouraged adult readers to write short reviews of the books they listened to or read. Reviews were placed in a notebook for browsing, and participants' names were entered into weekly prize drawings.

Library Book Club: The library's adult book club is held on the third Wednesday of each month. Members take turns facilitating each month's book discussion. Popular titles discussed in 2017 included: "The Boys in the Boat," "The Bonesetter's Daughter," and "Hillbilly Elegy." The library also added a book club just for Senior Citizens this year. See more under "Outreach."

Adult Language Learners: The library offers two primary programs for English Language learners: **Buddy Up and Read** and **Conversation Circles**. Through the Buddy Up and Read program, adult English language learners partner with an English-speaking volunteer to practice reading and/or writing and speaking in English. Reading buddies typically meet once a week for an hour at a prearranged time at the library. Some partnerships have lasted for two years or more. In 2017, nine Buddy Up volunteers met with an adult learner "Buddy" 162 times. At our weekly Conversation Circles program, a group of adult English language learners meet with an English-speaking volunteer facilitator to practice English speaking skills in an informal environment. The library hosted 90 Conversation Circles in 2017.

Digital Literacy

The library staff assists with technology on public computers every day. In addition to helping patrons navigate the web and computer software programs such as Word and Excel, staff assist with downloading eBooks and audiobooks from the library's cloudLibrary and RB Digital databases. Reference librarians also provide daily, ongoing assistance to patrons identifying and using online databases and resources for various types of research such as genealogy research, consumer research, automobile repair, and language learning. The library also offers numerous resources in print and online to facilitate adult learning, including preparation for standardized tests such as the GED and ACT, as well as job-related testing.



The Sisters in Crime writers' panel featured five mystery writers from throughout Minnesota



Senior Surf is a monthly computer class for adults age 55+

Senior Surf Classes for older adults (55+): Senior Surf classes provided in collaboration with the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (MAAA), Senior LinkAge Line and the Minnesota Board on Aging, are free, two-hour sessions offered the first Wednesday of each month for seniors who want to learn computer basics, Internet searching and websites of interest to seniors.

Using Family Tree Maker and Ancestry.com: This Legacy-funded class, designed for participants interested in an introduction to researching family history, was held in January. North Star Genealogy covered two popular digital genealogy tools in a hands-on presentation.

Protect Your Privacy Online, a Legacy-funded presentation by The Twin Cities Media Alliance, was held in December. Attendees learned how to stay safe when using social media, email, search engines, and making online purchases.

Arts, History, and Cultural Heritage

The library brought many adult programs specific to Arts, History, and Cultural Heritage to the Columbia Heights community in 2017. Highlights included:

Local Historian **John D. Cox** brought history alive in January with his informative presentation: “Stonewall Jackson: Legend of the Confederacy.” One attendee declared, “Put him in the schools!”

Anishinabe Beadwork, a Legacy-funded creative arts class presented by Julie Kastigar Boada of the Fond du Lac nation, was held in March.

Creating Characters, a Legacy-funded creative writing class taught by an instructor from the Loft Literary Center, was held in May. One attendee noted, “The instructor had great prompts.”

The library hosted its first meditation workshop in October: **Reducing Anxiety Through Meditation**.

Through her **Upstream: Mississippi** project, ceramic artist Anna Metcalfe hosted a tea and oral storytelling session at the library in November.

In celebration of **National Novel Writing Month** (NaNoWriMo), the library offered a “write-in” event in November, giving authors a chance to connect at the library over coffee, tea, and free Wi-Fi.



Participants in the Upstream: Mississippi project practiced oral storytelling over tea

In December, the **Cass Gilbert Society** presented an informative program on the missing, original furnishings from the Minnesota State Capitol building.

The **MELSA smARTpass Program** continues to provide access to arts programs exclusively for metro public library users. All it takes is a library card from the seven-county metro area to reserve free or discounted admission to a variety of arts experiences.

Hosted by the Friends of the Library, the **Scrabble Club** began meeting twice a month in 2017! Competition is always friendly, and all are welcome to exercise their brain in a social setting.

The library hosted its first art exhibit throughout the months of November and December in the community room. The inaugural exhibit, **The Manhattan Project**, featured the photography of local artists Walter Horishnyk and Richard Ott.

Outreach

At-Home Delivery: Residents who are not able to come to the library due to age or health issues can elect At-Home Delivery service. Numbers of participants vary due to changing situations, but generally include 6 to 8 people a month. The adult services librarian selects materials every four to six weeks for participants. Deliveries, which can include books in large print or regular print, audiobooks, cds, dvd and magazines, are made by volunteers or library staff.

The library worked closely with **Columbia Heights Metro North Adult Basic Education Center** to bring adult education resources to the library, including the addition of the ABE center’s language learning app to the library’s public computers. The library also hosts several informational class visits each year.

Senior Citizens Book Club: New in 2017, the library worked in partnership with the City of Columbia Heights Senior Citizen Coordinator to offer a book club for seniors at Murzyn Hall. The new book club meets every other month.

Also new in 2017, the library now hosts **Open to Business**, a partnership between Anoka County

and the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers. Open to Business provides prospective and existing entrepreneurs in Anoka with free one-on-one counseling with a business advisor at the Columbia Heights Public Library on the second Tuesday of the month.

The adult services librarian and members of the library board participated in a neighborhood **Eat and Greet** at Circle Terrace in July. About 80 people stopped to answer questions and win prizes at the Library Wheel of Fortune.

SERVICE TO YOUTH

Brianna Belanger, Youth Services Librarian

Early Literacy

The library offered storytime three times a week in 2017 with a specific developmental focus (toddler, preschool, baby) each day. While storytime may seem as simple as reading books and singing songs, much planning and thought is put into creating a developmentally-appropriate early literacy experience that empowers parents to use the same tools and techniques when talking, singing, reading, playing, and writing with their child at home. In addition to gaining early literacy, math, and science skills, children are learning important school readiness skills when they attend storytime. Such skills include forming a line, taking turns, and sitting still for stories.



Baby Read, Baby Grow is a weekly storytime program for infants and their parents or caregivers



"Noon Year's Eve" celebration

Storytime attendance continues to soar and a new initiative to introduce early STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics) concepts while inviting families to linger at the library has succeeded. Every Monday after storytime, the craft room is open for parents and children to explore activities such as printmaking, marble mazes, and process art. The desired outcome for this initiative is to encourage use of library resources in addition to attending storytime. Staff endeavor to extend storytime learning and encourage families to move from the meeting room into the library after storytime is over.

Other programs that support early learning and literacy offered in 2017 included **Parachute Party, Play Space, Block Party, and Noon Year's Eve.**

Partnerships

This year marks another successful year partnering with Independent School District 13's Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) program. Parent Educator Abby Sundquist continues to answer questions about child development and parenting strategies before and after storytimes and encourages families she sees at the Family Center to attend storytimes at the Library. This word-of-mouth marketing from a trusted resource has continued to benefit and grow the library's storytime community.

We are also in the second year of partnership with 4-H through the University of Minnesota Extension office to bring an afterschool technology program to tweens. Tech Wizards provides youth an opportunity to engage with positive adult role models around technology. Youth created video games in year one and are currently focused on creating films. Throughout the program, youth learn valuable goal-setting and planning skills as they produce a final product week by week. At the end of the year we celebrate youth accomplishments with a showcase of their creations, highlighting their talents and leadership.

Books and Reading

A primary goal of youth services is to connect youth with books that excite and engage them. We attempt to meet this goal in many different ways.

"Bookawocky," our summer reading program, focuses on keeping kids reading and learning throughout the summer months in order to avoid "summer slide." "Summer slide" is the tendency for students, especially those from low-income families, to lose some of the achievement gains they made during the previous school year. By providing youth an opportunity to read and attend programs all summer long, libraries seek to keep kids on an upward learning trajectory even when school is not in session. We made big changes to our program this summer in an effort to reduce barriers for patrons and paperwork for staff. This summer, youth



The Bookawocky summer reading kickoff party featured a lively musical performance by Leo and Kathy Lara

only needed to read and complete one book review to win a free book to take home with them. Reviews of additional reading they did throughout the summer were entered into weekly prize drawings for tickets to Bunker Beach, Crayola Experience, Minnesota Twins

baseball games, or the State Fair. In addition to the reading program, we also offered youth other exciting ways to learn and discover new interests through the performances and workshops offered over the summer. Some examples included: **Blues for Kids**, **Sumanagashi Marbling**, and **Multilingual Storytelling**.

This summer we also served lunch on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays through funding from the Youthrise Nutrition Program. Food insecurity and lack of nutrition is linked to a number of negative outcomes for youth, including poor academic achievement, behavior issues, depression, suicide, and several health-related problems. Increasing the number of meals served in afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs can improve enrollment and retention



African drumming circle

of youth participating in programs and enhance the long-term educational, health, and life outcomes of the youth.

We offered a new literacy opportunity for beginning readers this year called the Early Reader Club. Each session focused on practicing new skills like beginning sounds, rhyming words, sight words, and comprehension. We practiced these skills with stories and games in an effort to make learning to read fun and exciting! This program, in conjunction with READ Dogs,

is great practice and boosts confidence of newly emergent readers. READ Dogs provides readers new and old a chance to practice their skills on a judgement-free audience. Readers sign up for a 15-minute time slot and use that time to read to a therapy dog and trained reading tutor/handler.

Youth Read Down

On three occasions during the year youth aged 17 and under were encouraged to read down fines on their library accounts. For every fifteen minutes spent reading in the library, a kid could “earn” \$1.00 off overdue fines on their own card. The Read Down program reinforces the value of reading, encourages youth to use the library, and reduces barriers to borrowing library materials. In 2017, 135 youth participated in the Youth Read Down and earned \$662.52 in fine waivers.

Outreach

We reached over 2,500 parents and kids at a total of 28 outreach events over the past year. Whether it was talking to parents about building early literacy skills with their little one, or reaching out to students about summer programming, making time to get out into the

community was a priority.

Some of the outreach events included school visits to promote Summer Reading, the North Park 4th Grade Literacy Event, the City of Columbia Heights Community Picnic, Head Start student and parent visits to the library, and a welcome orientation for new teachers from ISD 13.

STEAM

Staff continued to focus on providing quality STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) programming for kids of all ages at the library. STEAM programming promotes experimentation, problem solving, and love of science while fostering growth mindsets. In addition, library programming during out-of-school time provides youth with a structure that becomes familiar over time and opportunities to connect with other youth and reflect on their experiences.



LEGO club

Preschool STEAM:

A monthly **Block Party** builds fine motor skills, promotes problem solving, and engages social skills.

Tinkerspace invites children and caregivers to extend their learning after weekly storytime sessions. Activities range from process art, which provides materials to invite creation but imposes no rules for what must be done, to science experiments and engineering projects.

School Age STEAM:

LEGO Club builds engineering, problem solving, and narrative skills.

Maker Club sessions begin with introductions and icebreakers, focus on the importance of having a Tinker Mindset (“mistakes are gifts, be curious, and see everything as an experiment.”) Students then have free time to interact with materials. Each session ends with a show and tell/reflection period. Activities have included marble mazes, newspaper towers, and recycled alien art.

Maker Lab: Clean Water featured staff from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization who taught kids about storm water runoff through experiments and discussion. The class ended with a visit to the library’s stormwater management system.

Pollinate MN: Students learned all about pollinators with hands on activities like trying on beekeeper’s gear, tasting different honeys, reading stories, and even observing a live

beehive.

Snake Discovery: This was a hands-on class in which kids learned all about reptiles.

The Bakken Museum staff taught kids how to notice heart failure along with the history of medical devices that help the heart.

4-H offered two standalone programs for youth. **Drones** and **Snap Circuits** programs began with background science information and moved into interactive work that encouraged discovery and experimentation.



Snake Discovery

Teen STEAM:

Science of Ice Cream explored the chemistry behind one of our favorite foods. After learning the science, kids had a chance to make their very own ice cream.

4-H Tech Wizards is a yearlong afterschool program that connects teens with technology and mentors to provide them with social, emotional, and STEAM skills. The University of Minnesota County Extension program operates local 4-H clubs and activities which prepare youth to learn and lead in their schools and communities.

During the 2016-2017 school year Tech Wizards focused on learning the components of video game creation.

At each session youth are provided some instruction and guidance, but ultimately, research and projects are self-directed with only occasional help from the mentor. Teens experience quality out-of-school time with structure and reliable adult mentors. They learn teamwork and leadership as they gain access to and understanding of technology. Twenty kids have gained confidence in their abilities and become regular library users as a result of this program. Partnering with 4-H has allowed the library to explore a new programming model for teens and tweens that provides an out-of-school activity which prepares youth for the 21st century workforce.

PEOPLE

A library truly is all about the people. Library people work on the staff; serve on the Library Board of Trustees, Library Foundation, and Friends of the Library; volunteer; and use the library every day.

Staff

In 2017 the library said farewell to three staff members. Alicia Cermak, Library Page who served since 2001, was unable to continue because of another full-time job. Library Page Geraldine Yorks, hired in 2016, resigned. Barbara Kondrick, Adult Services Librarian since 2013 and Library Supervisor from 1998 through 2004, retired in April with a gala send-off from colleagues and community partners.

2017 also marked the passing of our beloved “Miss Jo” in August. Children’s Librarian Joanne Scudder delighted children and parents from 1966 through 1995 with attractive displays in the children’s area, interactive storytimes with finger-plays and puppets, and competitive summer reading programs. She will be missed by many whose lives she touched.

The Library welcomed Cortni O’Brien as the new Adult Services Librarian in July. She hit the ground running to coordinate adult literacy and cultural programming and to revitalize the at-home delivery and adult volunteer programs.

A number of staff celebrated years-of-service milestones in 2017. Library Page Gianna Ritzko marked five years of service. Library Supervisor Al Mamaril and Library Page Alison Marzolf celebrated 10-year anniversaries. Clerk Typist Kelly Olson has served for 25 years and is as enthusiastic about the library’s mission and customers as she was when she started.

Library Board of Trustees

Tricia Conway joined the Library Board in 2017. The Library Board serves as an advisory body to the Director and the City Council on local concerns and helps promote library service within the community. The Board began work in 2017 to create a public art committee to advise on the purchase or display of art in the library.

Columbia Heights Public Library Foundation

Now that the “new” library is a reality, the Foundation continues to manage donated funds and make substantial gifts. In 2017 the Foundation donated \$41,000 to fund the universal gratitude wall in the lobby, to create a play and learning space in the children’s area, and to purchase large print books.

Friends of the Library



The Friends of the Library sort children's books donated to Project Bookshelf

In 2017, financial donations from the Friends of the Library helped to fund the Summer Reading Kick-off event and summer reading prizes. Members of the Friends assisted the library by facilitating a bi-monthly Scrabble Club throughout the year. They also sorted donations for Project Bookshelf and delivered 284 books for children and teens to Southern Anoka County Community Action (SACA) for distribution to families at the holidays of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa.

Volunteers

Volunteering is a mutually-beneficial partnership between the Library and members of our community. Volunteers of all ages have a chance to gain practical work experience, support an organization in which they believe, meet new friends, and have fun. The library benefits from having the equivalent of a half-time employee to deploy for necessary work.

Adult volunteers donated a total of 572 hours of service in 2017. Adult volunteers provided hospitality at library programs, delivered materials to the homebound, organized magazines, unpacked new materials, purged newspapers, sharpened pencils, facilitated conversation circles, and mentored new adult readers.



Three of the library's valuable "Volunteens"

Teen Volunteers donated a total of 336 hours of service in 2017. This year the Youth Services Librarian sought to grow the teen volunteer program and provide additional opportunities for youth to take ownership of the library and gain valuable job and leadership skills. The summer volunteering program was revamped and expanded into the school year. Volunteer assignments were tailored to the individual to allow

opportunities to use talents and interests on special projects. For instance, one volunteer with an interest in art planned and created a robot for the interior book return while another teen interested in working with youth helped out at library programs all summer long.

2017 LIBRARY STAFF, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND AFFILIATED GROUPS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>START DATE</u>	<u>END DATE</u>
Renee Dougherty	Director	04/01/2013 (2010)	
Barbara J. Kondrick	Adult Services Librarian	06/17/2013	4/7/2017
Cortni O'Brien	Adult Services Librarian	07/10/2017	
Brianna Belanger	Children's Librarian	10/19/2015	
Nick Olberding	Clerk Typist II -- Adult	07/05/2016 (2001)	
Kelly J. Olson	Clerk Typist II - Children's	06/01/1992	
Winnifred Coyne	Clerk	01/26/2015 (2013)	
Elaine Dietz-Mamaril	Library Supervisor	11/15/1993	
Nancy Soldatow	Library Supervisor	02/29/2000	
Al Mamaril	Library Supervisor	10/08/2007	
Alicia Cermak	Library Page (Substitute)	02/22/2001	7/31/2017
Alison Marzolf	Library Page	08/01/2007	
Rachel Meyers	Library Page	05/01/2008	
Gianna Ritzko	Library Page (Substitute)	01/17/2012	
Rosa Boda	Library Page (Substitute)	03/02/2015	
James Heryla	Library Page	03/02/2015	
Karen Yaeger	Library Page	01/11/2016	
Michelle Wermerskirchen	Library Page (Substitute)	06/23/2010	
Farrah Briest	Library Page	12/05/2016	
Maria Fink	Library Page	12/05/2016	
Tammie Yin Powell	Library Page	12/05/2016	
Geraldine Yorks	Library Page	12/05/2016	1/20/2017

LIBRARY BOARD

Patricia Sowada, Chair
 Nancy Hoium, Vice Chair
 Steve Smith
 Tricia Conway
 Catherine Vesley, Secretary
 Bobby Williams, Council Liaison

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Kay Reiners, President
 Jane Polley, Secretary
 Betty Robbins, Treasurer

FOUNDATION BOARD

Marlaine Szurek, President
 Don Vesley, Vice-President
 Kit Burgoyne, Secretary
 Sharon Shedlov, Treasurer
 Bruce Magnuson
 Jane Polley
 Cliff Shedlov
 Tom Sherohman, Emeritus

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY 2017 DATA

<u>COLLECTION TOTALS</u>		<u>TOTAL VISITORS</u>	123,947
Adult Books	26,009		
Youth Books	18,579		
		<u>INTERNET USE</u>	
Adult Audio	2,769	Users	29,050
Youth Audio	1,094	Computer Logins	47,506
		Minutes Used	1,225,225
Adult Video	2,649		
Youth Video	1,085		
		<u>PROGRAMS AT THE LIBRARY</u>	
Adult Magazines	1,381	Adult	179
Youth Magazines	59	Attendance	1,214
Newspapers	9	Children's	189
		Attendance	6,031
Watt Meters	4	Teen	64
		Attendance	797
TOTAL	53,638	Total Programs	432
		Total Attendance	8,042
<u>COLLECTION BY READING LEVEL</u>		<u>ROOM USE BY PUBLIC</u>	3,278
Adult	32,821		
Young Adult	2,988	<u>REFERENCE QUESTIONS</u>	12,909
Juvenile	17,829		
<u>ADDITIONAL SERVICES</u>		<u>ACTIVE BORROWERS</u>	
Items delivered to "At Home" users	359	Columbia Heights cardholders	14,727
Bulk loan to institutions	3,402	MELSA cardholders	3,527
Interlibrary loans for items not available at COH or ACL	1,022	Outstate cardholders	45
		ACL cardholders	<u>136,024</u>
COH items supplied for interlibrary loans throughout the state	446	Total Served	154,323
		<u>VOLUNTEER HOURS</u>	
<u>CIRCULATION</u>		Adults	572
Physical Items:	113,673	Teens	<u>336</u>
EBooks	7,663	Total	908
EAudiobooks:	<u>2,476</u>		
Total Circulation:	123,812	<u>DONATED ITEMS ADDED TO COLLECTION</u>	173