

## **Working from Home Ideas 4-9-2020**

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### **Book Reviews**

- Read books for book reviews and help to give recommendations to patrons
- Book reviews by staff for patrons – record them & put on social media

### **Cataloging**

- "Telecataloging" - Our catalogers are going through lists of items that have been ordered and getting them into the system with as much information as possible without the item in hand. With copy cataloging and in Evergreen, it's easy to do.

### **Census information**

- Census information and Encouragement – appointed a staff person

### **Challenges**

- This week is LEGO challenge and we are asking them to make a scene from a favorite story
- And now kicking around idea of comic strip or writing challenge with a theme of something

### **Circulation staff**

- Members of my circ staff aide in our collection development regularly so they have been tasked with keeping up with their usual gatherings of new materials and creating their online carts. Once we do open we hope to not be behind.

### **Collection Development**

- I loaned a laptop to one staff member to select books etc. from home
- Overdrive and Phone Hours – appointing staff person
- Collection Development - Our selectors are continuing to work on collection development. We are continuing to order items and having them held until we are able to get back to the library.
- I have a staff member who inputs info into B&T for book ordering purposes. She could do that from home, but I'd like to figure out how to get the info to her digitally.
- The adult librarian is coming in for a couple of hours on Fridays to get the magazines under control.

### **Community**

- Community Connections - We are in conversations with local organizations, and we are hosting and updating a local website with COVID-19 information for the entire county.

- Calling meeting room groups to let them know we have cancelled all meetings through April (this is something I just decided last week)

### **Databases**

- Library Databases Info – appointing a staff person

### **Director**

- Contacted every staff member to check in

### **Email**

- Answering email

### **Genealogy**

- Genealogy Department staff member took home one of our external hard drives and is working on our obituary database
- Genealogy Metadata - Our genealogy specialists are proofreading records in PastPerfect remotely.
- Genealogy/History Research - Our genealogy specialists and others are working on historical research for projects in our genealogy/local history department.

### **Job descriptions**

- Reviewing and suggesting changes/revisions to job descriptions to reflect these situations

### **Library building**

- I am painting tons of stuff, though I am here of the Library
- I also have one staff member who is coming in for a short time daily to get the books from the outside book drop, disinfect and sanitize them, and check them in
- Going in to empty drop box (I've mainly done that but I've had a few others help, too.)
- Sanitizing Plan – appointing a staff person
- Going in daily to empty our book drop, clean and check those items in as well as gather mail.
- Others have come in intermittently to shelve materials and check their email
- My circulation manager and I alternate days to come in to empty the book drops, return any voicemail messages that need assistance such as new passwords, and get the mail. We are wiping down the returned items with disinfecting wipes before placing them on carts. I am doing any bookkeeping items while I'm here.
- I have my janitor come in once per week to empty trash, wipe down handles and surfaces.
- We have someone still going daily to check the drops (sometimes a sizable amount and sometimes not much but there is always something), they check the books in, wipe them down, and then shelve them. Grabbing the mail is also part of this daily task and checking the phone messages.
- Our bookkeeper went in to get a batch of bills ready for the mail, I've been in to do payroll.

- Our custodian (who lives about 5 blocks from the library) volunteered to check on the library nearly daily just to make sure there isn't any vandalism going on and occasionally emptying the book drop.
- I am coming in most days to do payroll, bills, etc. and to keep an eye on our construction project.
- The custodian comes in on Sunday to clean up after me.
- One staff has started a fairy garden in one of our plants. She changes the scenes and takes pics. It's been popular on FB. Also, we have three stuffed animals that are getting into some serious mischief while everyone is away. Kids and adults like the posts.
- A giant sloth who is currently taking care of the library! To slow down the spread of the coronavirus . . .
- The Easter Bunny has been in the library foyer & is waving at kids

### **Local History**

- One of my employees took home some of our local history collection and is working to create finding aids. This has been in our plan for ages but we never seem to have time. If she gets through that, we have a historic newspaper collection that she may start indexing.

### **Local newspapers**

- For some reason I've been hit with multiple requests from local newspapers for library information so I've got some staff helping me fulfill those requests

### **Managers**

- I have supervisors checking weekly on the part time staff they supervise.
- I created a schedule (two people a day, one in the AM and one in the PM) that requires everyone to check- in on your day. Just let us know how you're doing, what ice cream you're hoarding, etc.

### **Mental Health**

- Mental Health Boosters – appointed a staff person

### **Miscellaneous**

- Asking what their passion or hobby is - it could blossom into a program when re-opened
- Thinking about the jobs you don't have time to do – like going over policies, etc. and parcel them out
- I said to be as productive as possible. Remember you are not working at home - you are at home, during a crisis, working. Steward tax dollars well.

## **Online card applications**

- Two staff members are handling the online library card applications that we just started this week
- Virtual Library Cards – appointing a staff person
- Library Card Signup - We are doing library card sign-ups over the phone so that people can get connected. We are using the online library card sign-up feature in Evergreen Indiana.
- I am concentrating on making it possible for people to get temporary library cards online to access our digital resources. I know everyone isn't online and I am planning to get in touch with our local grocery store and food pantry to see if I can put in some free book shelves in places people are going anyway. I thought I'd give them a few days to get things under control before contacting them

## **Online resources**

- Highlighting our online resources such as Overdrive and Kanopy and Hoopla

## **Paperwork**

- I brought home some of my most uselessly organized files to redo. One of the staff did the same.

## **Patrons**

- I am sending an email to patrons weekly so staff is sending me suggestions, ideas, moral support for that
- Call patrons just to see how they are doing

## **Pen pals**

- Connecting their younger citizens with older citizens via the library? We are thinking of penpals, or phone calls, or something that will initially keep the olders from maybe feeling too isolated at this crazy time.

## **Professional development**

- Webinars
- Online classes to improve your skills
- Staff are also attending webinars on COVID-19 issues, and also many many other professional development topics.
- Professional Development - All of our staff are taking the MCLS Soft Skills classes to earn a Soft Skills Certificate. They are also taking the Crash Course genre webinars from NoveList. When they have been taking other webinars, particularly related to COVID-19, I have asked them to summarize their findings and recommendations to send to managers.
- Take an online class
  - Gale Courses – you can take them with a library card

- The state library has provided a list of opportunities here: <https://continuinged.isl.in.gov/covid-19-webinars-resources-for-libraries/>
- More from the state library: <https://continuinged.isl.in.gov/find-training/>
- Niche Academy trainings
- I've asked my staff that are certified to take webinars that will earn them LEUs during their time at home.
- My recommendation to my board is going to be to have staff be required to watch a certain number of hours of training per week (archived webinars, etc.). This will be for staff who aren't normally required to get LEUs. I'm going to provide them with links to as many options as I can find and tell them they can choose whatever topics they want -- whatever interests them and they think will be useful for their jobs. I will ask them to provide me with a list of what they've watched and a very brief summary of what they learned from it. I haven't decided how many hours I'll require yet.
- Read articles and books for professional development (it doesn't have to be specific to the world of libraries either)
- Brought home a couple of books on teens in the library to start working on some staff training.

### **Professional magazines**

- I route professional magazines (print) that we subscribe to among staff, so those are out there being perused, too.
- Read professional journals and magazines

### **Programming**

- Program planning – develop programs & create crafts
- Adding virtual activities/programs
- My full time staff are providing virtual programs like story time, art programs, cooking programs, and teen meets.
- We have also been doing virtual programming with storytimes from home and adult crafting from home
- Potential Yoga w/ Kelly Meeks Video
- Virtual Programming - We are offering virtual programs. In particular, we have done storytimes, STEAM programs, and technology instruction. We are also working on written instructions for getting connected.
- Video record yourself instructing how to create the crafts
- Tape yourself reading a children's book ... or two or three...
- Tape yourself giving a book talk about what you are reading – especially if you have your own library books at home
- We are doing online videos for crafts to do with kids
- Plan a new program or service
- Prepare for a future program (cut out shapes for a future storytime)
- We are not doing a story time but have shared the zillions of links to many story times that are out there on the web right now. What we are doing is active learning and interactive. We are posting weekly challenges and having kids/parents share/show us what they are making, building, drawing, and most of all creating.

- We are also P'ing (π) virtually (which is a program we do each March) but that got cut short due to COVID-Buzzkill 19.
- Again, we are flipping it and making our presence interactive and even if parents/kids do want to do social media, we have still presented the challenge to them to interact with at home as they so choose. These challenges are on our newsletter and website also so if you don't do social media you can still find out about it.

### **Reader's Advisory**

- Readers/Viewers Advisory - We are encouraging our staff to read or view an item outside of their normal genre in order to explore our online offerings. They are then answering some questions about the item in a Google form, including appeal terms, themes, and read-alikes. Our public service specialists are also working on read-alike lists.
- Create a customized reader's advisor service for patrons

### **Reference**

- Reference - We are fielding questions from our email, and we hope to get our voicemails/phone lines forwarded to a staff member soon to be able to field patron calls.
- Schedule staff to take reference questions from home

### **Reopening library**

- Helping to plan for re-opening procedures
- Meet with full time staff through Zoom during the week as we are developing the phases of reopening the library and the processes that will be needed throughout this lengthy process of phases.
- Planning on how we will ramp up our services when we open back up to the public.

### **Social media**

- Suggesting social media posts (again, this has been mainly me so far, but that's because I follow far more blogs and professional journals than they do)
- Staff doing social media posts
- Another is working on Facebook and the Library's website
- Have other staff monitoring, updating and maintaining the website and social media
- Working on updating our social media, website, promoting our services
- Taking pictures of our Curious George monkey being curious in the library while the building is closed. These have been fun to post on FB.
- Creating book spine poetry to post to our FB page (April is National Poetry Month and we always celebrate it at our library),
- Uploading videos or if staff do not have access to the internet (which a few do not) then making a sign and taking a picture to upload to FB. We are starting a "we miss you" message.

- I have asked people who don't really have a position that warrants much work from home (circ desk duties and in charge of overdues, for example) to write up a "top ten questions we hear at the desk" and written steps explaining what a hold is and how to place one,
- Create a life cycle of book (from our cataloger) - from ordering to processing, cataloging, circulating, weeding, and some other things that would be (I think) interesting to our library patrons that we take for granted.
- Technology coordinator can work from home and is posting things on our social media sites and our website.
- Time to clean out the email folders and pinned list, bookmarked items in all media (eBook, Pinterest etc.) and such like. I'm thinking a few good ideas may come from revisiting all the things I saved but never had time to look at. (This is a tech thing but many people do have cell phone service at home, if nothing else.)

### **Staff meetings**

- We are now having weekly Zoom staff meetings to talk about working at home ideas

### **Staff picks**

- Writing short book/movie/music reviews for our Staff Picks information
- Staff recommendations - We are encouraging staff to record short (1 minute) recommendations for books and movies that are available through Overdrive, Hoopla, and Kanopy.

### **Staff without internet**

- My no internet people are also picking up the papers weekly here to build a COVID scrapbook
- another thing my staff is doing without internet is picking up our left over storytime crafts and bagging them up for individual passouts when we go to curbside.
- Read a book to someone (a child? An isolated elder?) on the phone
- We're calling some of our more isolated patrons each week. If we can't get them materials, we can at least check in on them and see how they're doing. It's not much, but as helpless as my staff and I have felt, this makes us feel a little better and the patrons seem to appreciate it.
- I included activities and coloring pages in book grab bags. So, each bag has 3 or 4 picture books, sometimes a chapter book and also some related activity sheets. Our Friends of the Library also provide funds for small boxes of crayons and granola bars that we're including in each bag. There are a lot of hungry kids in our area and the school district is providing meals but we're trying to help with the snack gap too. We are checking these bags out but don't expect anything to come back except the books!
- We created some bags this morning for adults, teens & kids and only did a Facebook post and in less than an hour our 10 starting grab bags went down to 2! Blown away - we just made 8 more and added activities and STEM kits. This is an awesome idea to serve our community when the doors need to be closed.

## **Storytime**

- We are doing a "personalized" storytime - daily we are posting a Youtube story, activity, and parent resources that go with the theme in honor of our regular storytime attendees. I attempted to do our own Story times, but our rural internet is soooo slow and unreliable right now.
- Doing storytimes on the radio
- In Kansas - director of children's services, has a storytime from her farm once or twice a week.
- I'm telling stories Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 3 on my library's Facebook page. Tales are from around the world. They are not Disney versions, but I'll try to keep them family friendly (banishings, instead of blindings). Feel free to share them with your patrons! Today was the first and it was Cinderella as recorded by the Brothers Grimm.

## **Summer Reading program**

- Working on young adult, adult, children's summer reading program
- I have staff reworking summer reading and other future programming to run virtually if the social distancing continues into the summer or fall.
- Planning - We are planning for our Summer Reading Program, including integrating virtual programming and how to handle the possibility of social distancing continuing into the summer.

## **Training**

- Working on Training documents,
- Create Niche Academy video trainings

## **Unemployment**

- Unemployment Information for patrons – staff point person

## **Videos, how to**

- Creating how-to videos
- Tape yourself giving instructions on some of our online resources

## **Website**

- We are transitioning to a new website so I've had staff working on that - checking for mistakes, suggesting edits, etc.
- Another is working on Facebook and the Library's website
- In addition to other things, I'm planning to work on redesigning our website. Again, a project we've talked about often but just don't usually have time for anything beyond general maintenance.



## **WIFI**

- IT make sure that the WIFI covers a wider area. We are really pushing that our Wifi band is in our entire parking lot. Everytime I am here there are two or three cars in our parking lot.

## **Youth Services**

- My youth services staff was charged with keeping up on Facebook posts with interactive things. We are doing easy DIY craft videos, virtual escape rooms, story times, etc. They were also tasked with coming up with their summer reading plans and contingency plans if all of this continues. Basically brainstorming how we can still provide some kind of program.
- Our Children's Director did tell me the other day that she is far enough (or could soon be far enough) into Summer Reading planning that she could put together packets of stuff that her (2) staff members could cut out at home, but that would require them to come get them or someone to take them to them.