

Outreach Services Report – September 2020

Youth Outreach (Deborah)

It has been an eventful month for Outreach. Although our process looks a little different due to safety procedures, we're still able to provide services to our patrons. They have been so glad to see us at our stops. When I emailed a teacher at Oliver School about which books the students would want, she expressed how glad she was that we could still bring books and told me the students had already been asking about the library. Although we can't set up the book carts at the school as in time past due to safety concerns, we are doing a monthly book drop so that the students will still have books to read.

The Amish school children were excited to see us as well and gave me lists of books they would like for our next visit. These children love to read, and I ended up placing over 170 holds to fill their hold requests. Also, the librarian at Peebles Elementary has already contacted me wondering if I could order books for one of the classes. I was happy to be able to do so.

To say I'm sad about Serpell resigning from the library is a big understatement. She has been an amazing coworker. The Outreach program is what is today in great part due to her hard work and diligence. However, I'm happy for her as she gets to focus on maintaining and growing her family's businesses. Although Destiny has big shoes to fill, I'm sure she'll do a great job in her new position as Adult Outreach Specialist.

Adult Outreach (Serpell and Destiny)

Outreach has resumed some of our services this month and the emotional response from our patrons is challenging for me to put into words. There were some people who expressed frustrations. One woman said, "The bars are open, I

do not understand why I haven't been able to get a library book." Another person was so excited about her books she was near tears and could barely talk. The common factor with all our deliveries was the need for socialization; they simply wanted to talk. Sure they were excited about books, but they were all eager to take a few minutes to chat. One patron came out onto her porch and said, "My porch is big I'll sit over here and you stand there so that we are far apart and now we can talk." She wanted to tell us about everything that had happened since the last visit. I understand the need for virus precautions, but when I put myself into their shoes the last 6 months I'm not sure how I would have survived the isolation and loneliness. I hear our customers say all the time they don't know what they would do without books. Their bodies no longer work, but their minds are able and capable. A good story is the only escape they have. They can't get outside and work in the garden or take a walk; reading is what takes them there. I can't help but think, when I'm 70, 80 or 90 where's the balance for my quality of life and the services my library offers me?

I would like to thank the Board for the opportunity I've had to work in Adult Outreach; this has been my favorite job. I have learned so much about older folks and the great benefit they are to our community. I know Destiny will do a great job and I feel confident that I'm leaving the position in good hands.