

ZOOM LWVCC Observer Report  
**Champaign Public Library Board of Trustees**  
**April, 2021**

A Combined Report from April, 2019 through March 2021  
Natalie Frankenberg, LWV Observer

This report covers 2 years due to the Covid pandemic.

The Champaign Public Library Board has 9 members and meets monthly, except for December. From April, 2019 until March 16, 2020 when the state shut down because of the pandemic, the CPL continued with a full schedule of programming for children of all ages, teens and adults.

The library sponsored a Young Entrepreneur Program where local teens and young adults pitched their innovative business ideas to a panel of experts. It continued the Tech Workshops and developed a new series of classes and job clubs to help community members who are looking for work, building career skills, and transitioning to a new field. The library continued to host authors, have weekend concerts and performances, have the summer reading program, held the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Food Truck Rally, and hosted other family friendly events. The Early Learning and Teen programs (including the after-school programs) continued to expand. “Mother Goose on the Loose” added a Spanish story time to their schedule. I could go on and on, but time doesn’t permit.

In September, 2019 the CPL collaborated with the League of Women Voters of Champaign County to host National Voter’s Registration Day at the Douglass Branch.

Douglass Branch continued to have programs and activities to reach out to the community through the Parent Lab and forged community partnerships with the University of Il school of Music, WEFT Community Radio, Krannert Center, and the City of Champaign Neighborhood Services. In October, 2019, Essie Harris, the Douglass Branch Manager, was celebrated for her 50 years of service to the City of Champaign.

During the time the library was closed, the staff offered services by email, chat, and phone. There were continuing monthly book clubs at the main library and at the Douglass Branch which were able to continue via Zoom. As time went on, the library added additional workshops and classes via the Zoom format. During this time, the Douglass Branch received new shelving, new collection arrangement, and a new checkout desk.

In January, 2020, even before the pandemic forced the library to close, the CPL introduced “curbside delivery” to make library services more convenient and accessible to customers without them having to come inside. This service was interrupted during the beginning months of the pandemic when everything closed; however, in mid-May, the CPL was able to reinstate the service even though the library had not yet reopened to the public.

On June 26, 2020, the CPL reopened to the public under the Champaign Public Health protocols and with limited hours of operation. All in-person programming was still cancelled, but on-line programming was expanded. On February 1, 2021, the CPL resumed regular hours, but there are still restrictions (Café remains closed, no public seating).

As of August 15, 2020, the CPL became a fine free library. Late fees were eliminated on all CPL materials.

Even though the library has reopened (with certain restrictions), the CPL continues to present online programs including story times, business seminars, tech seminars, and career seminars. Webinars can now be viewed after the fact on the library's YouTube channel. In addition, there has been a dramatic increase in the use of e-resources during the past year.

The CPL Foundation and the Friends of the CPL continue financial support of many library activities such as the Great Authors at the Library series and the Summer Reading Program. The CPL Foundation received a \$78,000 unrestricted estate gift. Since the FriendShop was closed during the pandemic, this money will be used to support programs and services normally funded with Friends gifts. In addition, the library is receiving a \$10,000 grant from Champaign Rotary to purchase 20 additional hot spots and chrome-books to better meet the community's need for internet access.

For the thirteenth year in a row, the *Library Journal* awarded the CPL Star Library status.

During October of 2019 and 2020, the annual audit review was conducted by Lauterbach & Amen, LLP and the library received the highest rating.

Serving as the LWV Observer to the Champaign Public Library Board of Trustees continues to be an interesting experience and a privilege.