

Research and Reference Team

September 2021 Report

September seemed to be the month where library procedures and work were settling back into a semblance of normal. More patrons, new and regular, were passing through our doors. They were asking us to help them in the standard library assistance to which we have been accustomed for all these years. That includes aid in finding books (fiction and nonfiction) and DVD movies, reference questions being answered by our staff, assistance being given to patrons using the computers, helping people on the copy machines, teaching how to use databases and our streaming services, and faxing documents for our clientele.

One area in which I saw a marked uptick in September is patrons' desire to print from their own devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops. We received several, if not a dozen or more, requests for device printing almost every day this month. By now, we have gotten it, pretty much, down to a science. The patrons ask for assistance, we give them a small piece of paper with the email addresses for our b&w and color printers, they pop whichever address into the "send" icon on their device and click on it, and then our staff prints the documents.

One interesting, and important, event in which the library participated was the Bridgeport Regional Business Expo. It was held on September 22 at the Holiday Inn. We were one of many participants. Not only were formal businesses represented, but nonprofits, colleges and universities, and us. The library represents a little smattering of all these areas. We see a need in the future to be the conduit for those who want to improve themselves in their work lives. That ranges from taking that first step in looking for entry-level jobs to the clientele who want to improve their skillset to "move up the ladder" professionally. We envision an area in the library devoted to entrepreneurial endeavors such as this.

The Business Expo was very important to us not only to expose our wares and services to individuals showing that we are there in the community for them, but also to demonstrate to businesses and other organizations how they may benefit from a working association with us. Participating in this outreach endeavor was City Librarian Elaine Braithwaite, Librarians Ron Fontaine and Jeffrey Coutts from RandR, and Librarian Danielle Bean & Library Assistant Andre O'Connor from Customer Services/Circulation.

Overall, September was a busy month for us. No doubt some of that was due to students getting back to school; some of that was also due to people getting back into their regular routines of 9-5 office work, too. The main thing is that we are getting back to normal and looking forward to the future.

Respectfully submitted,
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Librarian III, Head of Research and Reference