



Comments:

Submitted on Thursday, October 8, 2020 - 16:05

Submitted values are:

==Your Name and Contact Information==

First and Last Name (Optional): Shelby Stanley

Telephone Number (Optional):

Email (Optional):

==Your Message==

Subject (Optional): Library Card Renewal

Message Body:

Hello. I am surprised to find out that my library card needs to be renewed. I was just in the library in the last three weeks and no one suggested that I renew the card. So now I want to check out a book online and I am unable to until I drive into the library to follow through with the card renewal. Some library employee dropped the ball unfortunately.

Sincerely,

Shelby Stanley

BDL Response:

John called Ms. Stanley to renew the card remotely, and reviewed procedures with staff on remote renewal options.

page 1 of 5  
13 September 2020  
RECEIVED

SEP 10 2020

Branch District Library Board  
10 E. Chicago St.  
Coldwater, MI 47036

I'm pissed off!

However, before launching into a blistering denunciation of the Coldwater branch of BDL - two points. First, the support staff there - I'm referring to the team at Circulation - the two Cheryls, Pat, Brandi, the first-floor tech lady, more recent hires and the occasional fellow whose names I can't recall - is absolutely tremendous. They're helpful, knowledgeable, and pleasant as they perform their duties in a reasonable and unostentatious manner. They make library visits something to look forward to.

Now seems as good a time as any to point out that I am myself a librarian - actually, a retired librarian. That doesn't make me special and certainly not entitled. It means only that I know a small something about libraries and what makes them effective. I make no claim to omniscience. I graduated long ago (1975) from the master program (then still accredited by the American Library Association) at the University of Minnesota. The program closed sometime in the 80s - ostensibly a cost-cutting move. Following graduation I was a school librarian in Japan and Germany, then

page 2 of 5

spent the final sixteen years of my working days as a cataloger for the Fargo (ND) Public Schools. In the years following my retirement in 1999, I have continued my life-long involvement with libraries— as a user, volunteer, observer, and gadfly. Mine is not a newly-acquired dilettantism simply to keep me occupied.

On Saturday, 21 August, I visited the library for the first time since early March. I was eager to check out once again my all-time favorite DVD, the ballet GISELLE— music by Adolphe Adam and danced brilliantly by Anna Triganikova and Josef Varga with the Dutch National Ballet. Every month or so— perhaps more often— I had checked it out. My first reaction, not seeing it in its usual place on the shelf, was "Someone else has discovered the beauty of GISELLE! Wonderful!" For some reason, though, I decided to check the catalog anyway. To my amazement, no GISELLE! Then the penny dropped. Cheryl at the circulation desk confirmed my suspicions; it had been withdrawn from the collection. GISELLE had become a victim of BDL's aggressive weeding project embarked on during the COVID closure. It had to go; it was disposable because, despite multiple checkouts, there were all to a single patron— me. As Cheryl explained, had the item circulated among multiple patrons, it would not have been de-accessioned. Why? Is it not

page 3 of 5

reasonable to expect that BDL's policies/procedures/protocols make sense? Are they never reviewed or re-examined? Is there no human intervention in the weeding process? I am absolutely baffled by this action - withdrawing an item still being checked out, albeit by a single patron. It demonstrates on BDL's part a heretofore unimagined degree of stupidity! And, I might add, spite! How difficult would it have been for the library to call to ask if I wanted to buy the DVD before it ended up on a book sale table? Or, perhaps even more likely, in the dumpster? Jesus wept!

If someone in BDL's officialdom can offer a defense of this policy, I would like to hear it. That someone, however, should not be Ms. Kimberly Zeltner. This view, I admit, is based on just two of her letters of response to my concerns, the first of which I didn't bother to save and therefore can't reconstruct; anyway, to do so would cause me acute misery. Understandably, letters that are adoring and adulatory are always enjoyable to receive and respond to, for they allow Mrs. Zeltner to gush the usual platitudes, appreciation on behalf of BDL, for the letter writer's thoughtful news, "you're made my/our day," and on and on in a way that makes me want to - well, puke.

In May 2020 I submitted a card on which I described

page 4 of 5

a simple, inexpensive practice I'd seen at the Marshall District Library, one which I thought BDL might consider adopting: using spine labels - COMEDY/ DRAMA/ SCI-FI/ WESTERN/etc. - to identify the various genres of fiction in the DVD section. Marshall must have thought such labeling would be a tremendous help to patron browsing for DVDs. And while Mr. Feltner's response wasn't an outright, unambiguous rejection, it was cautious and tentative - some rubbish about how BDL is always on the lookout for new ways to better serve its clientele. Right away I thought of several questions I'd like to pose to Mr. Feltner: 1) cite a practice (just one will do) implemented here at BDL within the last year which you learned of from a visit to another library or read about in one of the many professional journals BDL subscribes to. 2) do you actually visit other libraries? which one? 3) name a library in Michigan or elsewhere comparable in size to BDL you consider worthy of emulation. Why? 4) assuming that cost, logistics, space, staffing, etc. are not impediments to instituting a new practice that would clearly benefit the patrons, what would be an argument for not doing so? Simply saying "It's not convenient" does not justify inaction.

For the moment I won't intrude further on your time. I've not even come close to the "blistering" indictment

page 3 of 5

I promised earlier. It's not that I've exhausted my repertoire of invective or that my strong disapproval of some BDL policies has lessened. I've reached the 'what's the point' point. I've no reason to be hopeful, for quite frankly, I don't think the library board or the library leadership has the capacity to differentiate between some trivial, inconsequential, petty vexation (say, the air-freshener fragrance in the men's room) and a concern that goes to the heart of any library's very existence - SERVICE! So much for "we want your feedback" or "your concerns matter" or "we value your input" or countless other equally vapid and nauseating phrases. It's a little hard to disguise insincerity and indifference.

Sincerely  
Zon Shinnaway  
324 Marshall St., #17  
Coldwater



Zon Shumway  
324 Marshall St. #17  
Coldwater MI 49036

September 30, 2020

Hello Mr. Shumway,

I am writing in response to your recent letter, which the BDL Board has read. Please know that the standards the library employs for deaccessioning do not involve looking at the number of patrons who used an item, but do check for a target number of checkouts in a given timeframe, along with the item's condition. Some materials that might otherwise be removed by those criteria would still be retained based on cultural or historical significance.

With regards to genre labelling of materials, the library has actually been reconsidering the decision by the previous director to eliminate these stickers. Thank you for your input on this topic.

Yours,

John Rucker  
Director

ALGANSEE BRANCH  
580-B S. Ray-Quincy Rd.  
Quincy MI 49082  
(517) 639-9830

BRONSON BRANCH  
207 N. Matteson St.  
Bronson MI 49028  
(517) 369-3785

COLDWATER BRANCH  
10 E. Chicago St.  
Coldwater MI 49036  
(517) 278-2341

QUINCY BRANCH  
11 N. Main St.  
Quincy MI 49082  
(517) 639-4001

SHERWOOD BRANCH  
118 Sherman St.  
Sherwood MI 49089  
(517) 741-7976

LUCILLE E. DEARTH  
UNION TWP. BRANCH  
195 N. Broadway St.  
Union City MI 49094  
(517) 741-5061

Fax (517) 278-2342

Publicity:

Holland, hollandsentinel.com, September 29, 2020



---

## Libraries embrace 'grab-and-go' style

By **Rosalie Currier**

@RosalieSJ

Posted Sep 29, 2020 at 10:45 AM

All six branches of the Branch District Library system were closed for three months but since June 29, they're back and on normal hours.

They are open, but it has been quiet. Not like normal when the library is a "community living room" so to speak, said John Rucker, director of the Branch District Library.

For now the library is limited to a 25 percent capacity.

"At some of our bigger locations, like Coldwater and Bronson, keeping capacity down has been pretty easy," Rucker said. "At tiny Algansee, it means that sometimes patrons are having to wait a few moments on the porch before they can enter."

Librarians offer the same services, just a little quicker. "Grab and go" is their new motto. That's for checking out books, magazines or movies. Sending a fax, using the wifi, or one of the computers is still an option.

Starting in September, they began to offer "grab and go" craft kits for all ages. Patrons take home a kit to make a craft. Online instructions are available.

The Coldwater Branch has "grab and go" binge boxes so patrons can quickly get a package of pre-selected similar movies for a themed movie marathon at home.

"Whatever brings to you the library, with our capacity limits and public health concerns in mind, we ask that all patrons limit their time in the building to one hour or less," Rucker said. "Having this limit is the right thing to do at this time so that the maximum amount of people can use the library safely."

All branches are following all the CDC guidelines and requiring face coverings. They've installed plexiglass partitions, increased ventilation and disinfect

surfaces every hour, or more as needed.

“Library staff have been fantastic taking on this additional role” Rucker said.

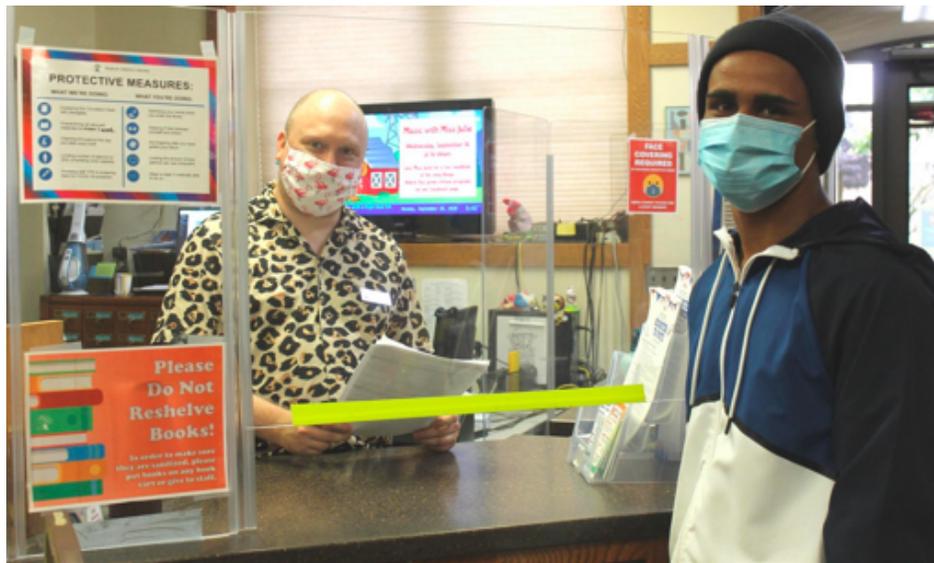
It’s still service with a smile behind that mask, “even if you can’t see it,” he said.

Summers at libraries are usually busy, but this year, while numbers were down, some branches offered outdoors and socially distanced programs.

The Bronson and Union Township branches have adequately large and quiet outdoor spaces to allow for outdoor story times. They drew up to 30 children at a time, Rucker said.

Staff have been offering a wide variety of online programs — nearly 300 original programs since April. They are on the library website or Facebook page. They have also hosted programs such as the Boogie Woogie Kid, and Holocaust survivor, Irene Butter.

“Public engagement with these programs has been phenomenal,” Rucker said. “I’m heartened at how both our patrons and our staff seem to have found a good balance between providing as much of our normal service as we’re able while keeping our operations as safe as possible for everyone involved.”



Mo Saleh stopped at the Coldwater branch of Branch District Library to fax some documents. Library staff, Ben Lyon, offered service with a smile even it was behind a mask. [Rosalie Currier Photo]

Coldwater, The Daily Reporter, September 30, 2020, page A1-A2



Summer story time in the parking lot at the Bronson branch drew about 30 children. But some days it was hot out there, said Lynnelle Eash, librarian. [PHOTO PROVIDED]

## Libraries embrace 'grab-and-go' style

By Rosalie Currier  
@RosalieSJ

All six branches of the Branch District Library system were closed for three months, but since June 29, they're back and on normal hours.

They are open, but it has been quiet. Not like normal when the library is a

"community living room" so to speak, said John Rucker, director of the Branch District Library.

For now, the library is limited to a 25 percent capacity.

"At some of our bigger locations, like Coldwater and Bronson, keeping capacity down has been pretty easy," Rucker said. "At tiny Alganssee,

it means that sometimes patrons are having to wait a few moments on the porch before they can enter."

Librarians offer the same services, just a little quicker. "Grab and go" is their new motto. That's for checking out books, magazines or movies. Sending a fax, using the wifi, or one of the computers is still

an option.

Starting in September, they began to offer "grab and go" craft kits for all ages. Patrons take home a kit to make a craft. Online instructions are available.

The Coldwater Branch has "grab and go" binge boxes so

**See LIBRARIES, A2**

## LIBRARIES

From Page A1

patrons can quickly get a package of pre-selected similar movies for a themed-movie marathon at home.

"Whatever brings you the library, with our capacity limits and public health concerns in mind, we ask that all patrons limit their time in the building to one

hour or less," Rucker said. "Having this limit is the right thing to do at this time so that the maximum amount of people can use the library safely."

All branches are following all the CDC guidelines and requiring face coverings. They've installed plexiglass partitions, increased ventilation and disinfect surfaces every hour, or more as needed.

"Library staff have been fantastic taking on this additional role" Rucker

said. It's still service with a smile behind that mask, "even if you can't see it," he said.

Summers at libraries are usually busy, but this year, while numbers were down, some branches offered outdoors and socially distanced programs.

The Bronson and Union Township branches have adequately large and quiet outdoor spaces to allow for outdoor story times. They drew up to 30 children at a

time, Rucker said.

Staff have been offering a wide variety of online programs — nearly 300 original programs since April. They are on the library website or Facebook page. They have also hosted programs such as the Boogie Woogie Kid, and Holocaust survivor, Irene Butter.

"Public engagement with these programs has been phenomenal," Rucker said. "I'm heartened at how both our patrons and our staff seem to have found a good

balance between providing as much of our normal service as we're able while

keeping our operations as safe as possible for everyone involved."

Coldwater, The Daily Reporter, October 13, 2020, page A2

**BRANCH DISTRICT LIBRARY**  
***FIRST NOTICE OF***  
***2021 BUDGET HEARING***

**October 19, 2020**

**5:30 P.M.**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81623472004>**

TAKE NOTICE: On October 19, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. the Branch District Library Board shall conduct a public hearing on its proposed 2021 budget of estimated revenues and expenditures. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this budget hearing will be conducted online via the Zoom platform at the address above. Full public participation details are available on the library website at <https://www.BranchDistrictLibrary.org>.

**The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.**

Copies of the budget are available for public inspection at the entrance to the Library Headquarters, 10 East Chicago Street, Coldwater, and at each branch location – Algansee, Bronson, Quincy, Sherwood, and Union City, or on our website:

<https://www.BranchDistrictLibrary.org/budgets>.