“We’re Here for You”:
Serving Our Community in New Ways

“Though the way we work may change, our commitment remains strong: to enrich our community by providing universal access to resources for knowledge, innovation, and enjoyment.”

During this unprecedented time and as we all practice safe, social distancing, we want you to know that your Poudre River Public Libraries are here for you.

Library staff are stepping up right now in ways you might not even realize. While some of our work is visible on our website and social media platforms, much of it is happening behind the scenes and alongside community partners. And, all of it is aimed at serving you in new and innovative ways.

“We want our community to know that we’re here for you,” says David Slivken, Executive Director, Poudre River Public Library District. “Though the way we work may change, our commitment remains strong: to enrich our community by providing universal access to resources for knowledge, innovation, and enjoyment.”

Since our buildings closed in mid-March, we’ve been busy bringing many library services to you at home. Here are just a few of the activities that are happening so that you can stay connected to accurate information, important resources, and fun entertainment.

Increased Access to Resources and Materials

Even though the library buildings are closed, the digital collection and online resources are still available, 24/7.

For many people, this was the first time they ever accessed eBooks, eAudiobooks, streaming movies, and other digital materials. Our librarians are busy assisting people with questions about downloading and streaming items on their PCs, tablets, and smartphones.

We saw a significant increase in the number of “new users” to download services like hoopla, OverDrive, and RB Digital. In the first two weeks after the closure (March 15-30), new users of hoopla increased 110% over the same time last year, and new OverDrive users grew by a whopping 431% compared to the previous year!

“In the past weeks, we’ve been rapidly adapting our digital services for even greater at-home access and identifying ways to support remote learning, teaching, and researching,” says Tova Aragon, Collection Development Manager.

With the increased demand for digital materials, our Collection Development team has been busy ordering and expanding our digital resources to increase the variety and quantity of titles available. And, they’ve been doing this from home! The team has filled in popular series, increased copies of titles to reduce hold wait times, and increased check out limits.

The Collection Development team continues to work to open up more databases and online research resources for at-home access and to add new digital resources for temporary, free access like TumbleMath, TeenBookCloud, and AudioBookCloud.

Temporary Library Cards and Instant Access

To better support individuals, families, and students who don’t have a Poudre River Public Library card, we opened up our Temporary Cards to provide access to our digital download services and premium eResources.

In the first three weeks after closing the buildings, nearly 300 temporary cards were issued to individuals, 28% of whom were students.

The length of time available to use a temporary card has been extended through at least August 30, 2020 to ensure people have access to the digital Library until we are able to reopen our doors.

Virtual Storytimes

During a typical week at the libraries, library storytellers host more than 30 storytimes across the District and in the community. With the closures, storytellers have gone virtual, delivering online storytime activities by video. The Library’s YouTube Channel features a “Virtual Storytime” playlist which also includes read alouds from local community helpers like Poudre Fire Authority Fire Chief DeMint and Fort Collins Police Deputy Chief Greg.

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Virtual Storytime RESOURCES

For more information about the Library’s virtual programming, please visit www.poudrelibraries.org.

Continued on reverse.
Small Business and Employment Assistance

Our Business, Nonprofit, and Career Development Librarians have been extremely busy during this time, not only assisting local business owners, nonprofit agencies, and job seekers, but answering the call for help from the State Office of Economic Development and International Trade.

The State Office has seen an overwhelming number of inquiries from Colorado small business owners seeking accurate information about the CARES Act, unemployment, IRS tax requirements, grants and funding resources, and much more. Our business and nonprofit specialists are answering questions, in both English and Spanish, and directing people to the critical resources or information they need.

“Our aim is quick response time in helping the Colorado community,” explains Matthew West, Business Librarian at the Library District. “This is a critical time and new information can have small business owners looking for answers. So many of our Colorado community members are surprised to find the resources and expertise that Poudre Libraries offer.”

Ask-a-Librarian and Remote Reference Help

Librarians continue to provide reference services to our community remotely via our digital assistance services. Librarians are staffing the Ask-a-Librarian service, and our Answer Center and other key staff are helping to answer a variety of questions, many around how to access the Library’s digital collections from home.

The 2020 Summer Reading Challenge, A Summer to Imagine, kicks off this month with registration beginning May 20 online at PoudreLibraries.org and over the phone. This year’s adventure will look a bit different from years past with all of the activities going virtual.

Even though we won’t be able to see each other in person during this time, there is still much to look forward to this summer! Library staff have been busy working to adapt the summer reading program to a fully digital format and still deliver the fun experiences our children and families look forward to. Library staff have been busy working to adapt the summer reading program to a fully digital format and still deliver the fun experiences our children and families look forward to.

Here are a few of the highlights:

New Signup Options in English and Spanish

From the Summer Reading Challenge page (PoudreLibraries.org/) you can choose your preferred language: English or Spanish.

Reading Prizes

With the library buildings closed for the health and safety of our community, this means that you won’t be able to pick up your signup gift and 10-Hour reading prize until later in the summer. But don’t worry! We’re holding on to all of the gifts and prizes and will let you know when and how to pick them up once we’ve reopened our libraries.

Reading Makes Cents

There’s a new way to stay motivated reading this summer and support the community at the same time.

The Poudre River Friends of the Library have pledged to donate $3,000 to the Northern Colorado COVID-19 Response Fund if we surpass 200,000 hours — the total number of Summer Reading hours logged last summer. Can you help us break that number by August 16?

The Response Fund is administered by The Community Foundation of Northern Colorado and United Way of Larimer County. You can learn more about the Fund at www.nocofoundation.org/covid-19.

Virtual Programs and Activities

Virtual programs for A Summer to Imagine get started in June. Visit our online events calendar (PoudreLibraries.org/events) to see the entire list of programs along with descriptions and instructions on how to participate from home. More programs will be added throughout the summer as they become available online, so be sure to check back often.

2020 Summer Reading Challenge Goes Virtual

We will also share programs on our social media channels like Facebook and YouTube. Give us a Like or a Follow!

The Summer Reading Challenge will continue to evolve as we move through the summer. Be sure to stay up-to-date with all of the virtual programs, activities, and challenges on our website and social media. You can also subscribe to our “This Week at the Library” eNews for updates: PoudreLibraries.org/subscribe.

Virtual Programs and Activities

FAQs

K-12 Remote Learning Resources

When Poudre School District (PSD) decided to move to remote learning, more than 30,000 students found themselves at home navigating new methods for learning and interacting with their teachers.

The Library District worked with PSD to ensure teachers, students, and families could easily access online learning and teaching resources from home and could sign up for a temporary library card if they didn’t already have one.

New digital learning services like TumbleMath were added to the Library’s vast resources for K-12 homework help, research, and eLearning tools, and many teachers have been taking advantage of educational films and videos available through the Library’s Films on Demand and Kanopy.

Spanish Language Community Resources and Services

The Library’s Community Services team is busy producing and translating important information into Spanish for our community. They have shared key information and resources about the 2020 Census, filing for unemployment, obtaining small business loans, navigating the immigration process, finding jobs, and much more. As you can imagine, these tasks have become even more critical during the COVID-19 crisis.

To share this information as widely as possible, we’re making use of the Library’s YouTube Channel. All of the Spanish-language videos are available in the playlist, “Servicios y Recursos para la Comunidad.”