

Subject line: Thank you Volunteers! – from the Library Commission

Dear Volunteers,

On behalf of all of us at Boulder Public Library, we thank you for your ongoing support in person, virtually, and in spirit from afar throughout this tremendously difficult past year. Our community and the world over continue to experience tragedy. Despite it all, our community has remained creative, resilient, and generous. Your support this year has made all the difference, and we thank you.

When the library shut down to the public in March 2020, we all had to adjust to a “new normal.” So many of our regular volunteer opportunities ground to a halt, while some were able to adjust and move online. For those of you who have not been able to volunteer, we have missed all of you and the beautiful energy you bring to serve and improve our library and community.

For those of you who were able to continue to help, we thank you. You helped our library provide community programming, services, reopen and maintain operations in uncertain times. Some of you donned face masks and gloves and emptied our book drops and sorted books for quarantine. Others played a variety of roles including volunteering outside under a tent to hand out prizes to Summer of Discovery participants, distributing hotspots and computers to those in need, compiling hundreds of literacy kits, and making contactless deliveries for patrons in our Home Delivery program.

Several programs were able to pivot online. BoulderReads has continued, with 57 tutors and 65 learners meeting regularly to work towards literacy and life goals. Go Club continues every week on Zoom, sharing the love of this strategy game and providing community and connection with kids in an otherwise very isolating time. The Maria Rogers Oral History Program through Carnegie Local History Library worked on nearly 50 oral histories to record and preserve the experiences of community members. The Tech Drop-In program became Virtual Tech Helpers, offering free technology consultation all online. Conversations in English facilitators continued providing sessions online to enable English language learners to build their language skills. We also had teens who gave over 300 hours to plan fun events for teens such as an online Murder Mystery Party and participating in our first Teen Summit.

While so much of the future has felt unknown, the support of our amazing library community and volunteers buoyed us through. In 2020, while we missed so many of our regular volunteers, still 385 individuals donated 10,900 hours of time to the library, a contribution valued at \$321,550. Those who were able to volunteer gave approximately 25% more time per person this year than in the past. That is an amazing contribution, and we thank you.

We celebrate each of you who has supported us this past year and in previous years. We all want our community to be safe and healthy and we look forward to the time when we can have more in-person volunteer opportunities again. This National Volunteer Appreciation Week, we honor you this week and every week. You improve our library and our community as a whole. Thank you!

With our sincere gratitude,

The Boulder Public Library Commission

Benita Duran - Scott Steinbrecher - Steven Frost - Jane Sykes Wilson - Joel Koenig