



2022 Library Visit Interview Form

Library Name: Deforest Area Public Library

Certification Grade: 1

Date of visit: October 18, 2022

Library staff present at the visit: Jan Berg

SCLS staff present: Amy Gannaway

Amount of time spent at visit: 1 hour

[Please limit this section to the answers to the specific questions, and include as much detail as possible. Report other information or observations in the “other information” section below.]

1. How are you and your staff doing?
 - They have been doing great.

2. What are the next projects (big or small) on your library’s to-do list?
 - They generally do one big event per month. In September they did a Harvest Festival.
 - They are doing a Haunted House in October. They have never done a haunted house before so this is taking up a lot of staff time. They are partnering with the Drama Club at the high school and also Parks and Recreation.
 - For November they will do a “Dino-vementer” day where they will have an animatronic T-rex. They had this last year and it was very successful.
 - For December they have Santa come and also a brass group will be playing from the balcony.
 - They do a Winter Reading Program.
 - Other events: Harry Potter party (this was the 20th year), summer concert series, and open house during National Library Week.

3. Are there service changes or new services from the last two years that you plan on continuing?
 - Some things that started during COVID have naturally fallen away. For example, they continue to offer curbside pickup but there is very low demand. They continue to do some hybrid offerings because there is some demand but most events are fully in person.
 - The library board continues to meet in a hybrid format because some board members prefer virtual meetings. On the plus side, there is better board member attendance and they don’t have problems getting a quorum. (Before COVID sometimes they had problems getting a quorum at in-person meetings.)
 - For meeting rooms, they have reduced the number of people per room.
 - Most things are “back to normal.”

4. How can SCLS help?

- Jan asked the staff about this and they had a couple of things:
 - i. Don't take two years to make decisions. This was more specifically about the multi-part DVD TV series process. Jan understands that we are trying to be inclusive but the long decision-making process makes it hard to provide good customer service and be flexible for patrons. Jan feels that we could do more surveys to get input (if people decline to fill out the survey then that is their choice).
 - ii. Staff would like Biblioovation to work more smoothly. They feel that it's clunky. Some issues have been on the Known Problems list for a very long time and haven't been fixed. I asked for more information but Jan didn't have specifics. She said that maybe some of the problems have already been fixed. I did tell her that there were a number of fixes in the sandbox and that we would upgrade production as soon as we possibly could. Jan said that she knows that Biblioovation is a big system with a lot of moving parts and that fixing one thing can break something else, etc. but that it can be frustrating for staff and patrons when things aren't working. She said that some staff who have worked in other libraries with different ILS systems think that Biblioovation functionality is behind those other systems (I didn't get any specifics though). Other staff have fond memories of Dynix but that there could also be some nostalgia at play (Dynix wasn't perfect either).
- They have been working with Deb Haeffner on building-related issues. The building is 20 years old and they need to replace carpet and other things. However, libraries are often at the bottom of the municipality's list for capital projects. They want to start with the children's room. It's sensory overload – things were different 20 years ago and now the aesthetic is oriented toward calmness and quiet. They need to tone it down. They will do some spot fundraising to help fund that project. They have a \$25,000 bequest to get started.
- Jan said it would be helpful if SCLS could compile a wage comparison survey and post it on the website so directors could consult it as needed. Directors send out individual requests via wispublib and then each director has to fill out that individual survey or answer that query. She said that SCLS/WLA used to do this (not sure when though). She said that the information is available in library annual reports but it's a matter of pulling the data out of the annual reports, compiling it, and posted it online.
- She said SCLS staff have been helpful and cheerful. Rose has been very helpful with the Drupal migration. As the library has grown they have less of a need for SCLS services. For example, they don't use the printing service because they can do that in-house and they are often working at the last minute. They have staff who can do graphic design work.

5. Is there anything else you'd like to share or discuss?

- They are doing the best that they can.
- Jan appreciates the continuing education information from Jean. She said that people are still attending things virtually, which is convenient, but some of that in-person social mixing is missed. Jan isn't sure what SCLS can do about that, though, and how we can get back to some in-person things.

Other information gathered at the visit (interesting tidbits, general impressions of the library, or alternative topics):

- Jan gave me a tour of the library. They do have a lot of storage space. They have shifted their magazines to clear bins which take up less space than traditional magazine racks.
- There is an outdoor space which they used over the summer for programs (on the Library Street side). They have shifted to doing their outdoor concerts on the Market Street side with the library as a backdrop. They block off the street and patrons can bring chairs. There are also some benches available. This has worked out better than using the park (which is not too far away) due to the fact that the library is a solid building behind the players and provides good acoustics. The building also provides shade from the sun.
- The Deforest Historical Society is housed in the building. There are some public displays about the history of Deforest and also some 1920s clothing on display. The historical society has old newspapers and other historical documents/objects/clothing in a semi-climate controlled room.
- Deforest has a large die cut collection which patrons can use in-house. They also have 3-D printers, a tool collection, a sublimation printer, and other maker-type things (downstairs in The Workshop). Their “take and make” kits continue to be popular.
- The building incorporates elements of Deforest’s Norwegian heritage (e.g. stave churches, the Norwegian cross, and the dragons).