



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2021.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Fluvanna

Program Title: Fluvanna County Library Response to COVID-19

Program Category: Customer Service

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Kelly Belanger Harris

Title: Assistant County Administrator

Department: Administration

Telephone: 434-591-1910

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Eric M. Dahl

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

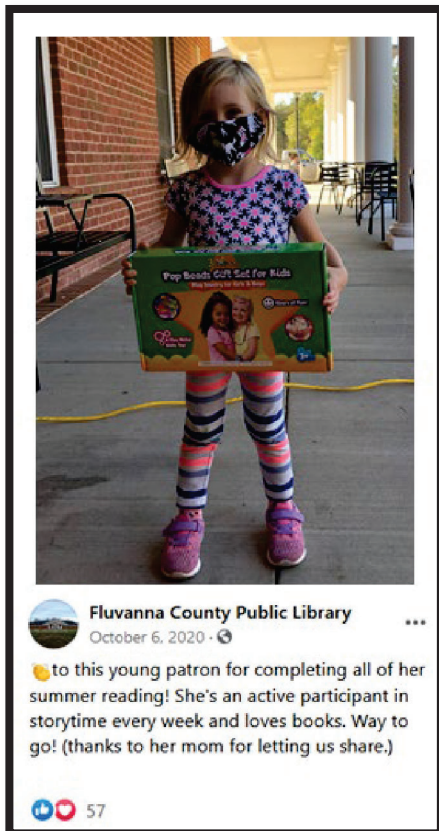
# FLUVANNA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

**The Problem:** Disruption of services because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The Goal:** To continue to provide access to Library services without interruption.

**Summary:** The Fluvanna County Public Library wanted, and needed, to continue providing services during the pandemic. Closures because of COVID-19 gave Library staff an opportunity to get creative and adapt to the new reality of physical distancing and closures, and to fundamentally change how services were provided. In order to keep staff and customers safe, the Library implemented Curbside Delivery, Grab n' Go kits, Virtual Story Time, and more.

**The Challenges:** Fluvanna County is a small, rural county approximately 20 miles southeast of Charlottesville, with a population of around 27,000. Reliable internet service is not available in all parts the county. When all Fluvanna County Government Offices and Buildings, as well as Fluvanna County Public Schools, closed to public admittance on March 16, 2020, many residents were left without internet. Like many, if not most, localities, Fluvanna County was committed to providing uninterrupted services while maintaining all required and recommended safety protocols. The Fluvanna County Library is a much-loved and much-utilized service in the County and when faced with the prospect that many community members would lose access to more than just Library services if the library closed, Library staff got creative.



**The Solutions:** To continue providing services to the community, the Library began offering Curbside Delivery on March 17, 2020, **one day** after the County closed its doors to the public. The rurality of the community, as well as an elderly customer base, were specific concerns. To get the word out that the Library was still open for business, Library staff relied heavily on social media channels, the County's weekly email newsletter, FAN Mail, and Library and County websites. Signs were posted on Library doors alerting patrons to the restrictions mandated by the State in an effort to curb transmission of COVID-19. Because people weren't congregating in any of the usual places, getting the word to those in the community who are not electronically connected was a challenge and Library staff relied on word-of-mouth. Library items could be reserved online or, for those customers without access to the internet, they could be reserved by phone. New library card applications were also available by phone. Library patrons could request specific items to be reserved, or if requested, Library staff would pull a bag of items from a specific genre or items from the New Arrivals shelf. Book bundles of favorite authors and genres became very popular. Patrons were called when their items were ready for pick up; pick up was as easy as calling from the parking lot or knocking on the door upon arrival.

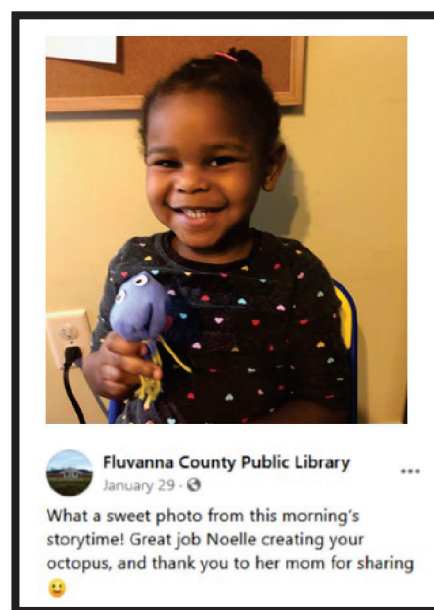
To address the needs not only of Fluvanna's adult population, but of its youth as well, a Curbside Reading program was implemented, running in summer and winter months. Both were very successful. Youth and adults of all ages were encouraged to participate by filling reading logs that could be printed at home or picked up at the Library. Participants kept track of their reading and returned their logs to the Library for prizes. Library staff created traveling prize-boards for children to choose from, toting the prize-boards curbside and keeping all prize

items in individual bags to maintain safety and limit cross-contamination. One hundred-five children and teens participated, with over 1,100 adult entries in the Summer Reading program. Over 500 children and teens and nearly 600 adults participated in the Winter Reading program, surpassing even non-COVID programming for the Adult Winter program. For every 10 books read, children and teens were given one prize entry: they read over 5,000 books.

With in-person workshops and craft days eliminated because of COVID-19, Library staff created “Grab n’ Go” kits to fill the need for activities. During the summer of 2020, Library staff provided weekly “Grab n Go” kits for preschool (50), kid (75), teen (50) and adult (50) patrons. Summer “Grab n’ Go” kits were built around the theme of “Imagine Your Story” and provided several activities and crafts. Participants were asked to share pictures of their completed crafts by posting on Facebook or by emailing photos to the Library. Preschool kits included – a free book, play dough kits, paper plate crafts, paper cup crafts, coloring pages and more. Older child kits included - Cardboard castles, toilet paper roll dragons, edible science experiments, dragon masks, straw rockets, and more. Adults were not left out! Those kits included - watercolor painting, rock painting, paint-by-number kits, and more. This program continued on a monthly basis during the school year. The Virginia Cooperative Extension 4-H program provided STEM kits as part of this program, weekly during the summer and monthly during the school year.

To replace the very well-attended pre-COVID Story Time, a Virtual Story Time was implemented, first with staff streaming video recordings on YouTube from home and progressing to interactive sessions on Zoom. “Virtual Zoom Story Time” with Ms. Keri Anne occurred twice a week with stories, rhymes, songs, and dancing. Children interacted with the rhymes, songs, and dancing and completed their session much as they had at in-person Story Time, with a craft they could do together and share with other families via Zoom. The most rewarding part was seeing the kids again and interacting with them in their homes. Meeting through zoom expanded community relationships as additional family members and pets were introduced during “Virtual Zoom Story Time.”

Other enhancements to Library services included two new outdoor work areas. The Library has provided Wi-Fi access all day, every day, for many years, and adding rocking chairs to the front porch was a welcome and popular addition. Benches, tables, and chairs were added to the covered walkway at the rear of the Library. Propane heaters were added to the covered walkway during the winter months to extend the accessibility of the area and providing comfort for those connecting to the Library’s Wi-Fi.



**Replicability:** Each of the programs, implemented out of necessity during the pandemic year, are easily replicated by other library systems, provided there is interest and support from local groups, volunteers, and staff. A supportive Friends of the Library group is always helpful. Where available, Curbside features could be expanded to allow patrons to reserve items by text and by using internet forms. Public libraries have long partnered with local groups in the community to provide programs and opportunities. Fluvanna Library, for instance, regularly partners with Cooperative Extension and depending on the community, there could be many other opportunities for partnering in community.

The Fluvanna County Library is committed to serving the residents of Fluvanna County. Repeatedly throughout 2020, they demonstrated this commitment by responding with creativity, flexibility, and expediency in order to continue the outstanding service the residents have come to expect. In a year filled with difficulty and uncertainty, Fluvanna Library staff and volunteers consistently demonstrated their commitment and care for the residents of Fluvanna County.

**Conclusion:** The COVID pandemic, for all its difficulties, provided unique and unexpected opportunities. Library staff, in an effort to keep up with the dynamic nature of 2020, learned just how responsive and flexible programming could be and lived up to their mission to, ...“serve as a source of information, intellectual development, entertainment, and personal enrichment for the residents of Fluvanna County.”

## **Fluvanna County Library Employees 2020-2021**

Cyndi Hoffman, Library Director  
William Strong, Library Assistant - FT  
Carol Owen, Library Assistant II - PT  
Jessica Taylor, Library Clerk - PT  
Joanna Knoll, Library Clerk - PT  
Marilyn Austin, Library Clerk - PT  
Erinn Henning, Library Clerk - PT  
Jen Miller, Library Clerk - PT  
Kelly Tyree, Library Clerk - PT  
Ellen Mayooue, Library Clerk - PT  
Trisha Shuman, Library Clerk - PT  
Ashley Schmitz, Library Clerk - PT