Providing Library Services – Virtually

“The month of April really Zoomed by!” – Deputy Director Ryan Roy

...ok....ok...... we see what you did there Ryan...!

As meetings continued to be held virtually, Zoom became the platform of choice for all weekly department meetings. From Young Readers to Adult Services to Library Managers, the library staff kept in constant contact as they provided reference services, created new online content and virtual programming and services and kept the library website and social media platforms constantly updated during the library’s closure in April due to the COVID-19 virus.

Zooming with a few of our amazing library staff members from the Young Readers and Adult Services Departments.
To assist patrons looking for resources during these difficult times, especially our senior population, Adult Services Librarians Laura Ishizaka and Deb Ripley created a page specifically for them highlighting resources including technology assistance, meal delivery programs, grocery delivery, health resources, and more! Called Senior Resources, it can be found on our webpage at pvld.org/seniors.

Adult Services Assistant Manager Lessa Pelayo-Lozada and Teen Services Librarian Megan Durazo updated the Explore and More webpage with a new tab - Virtual Book Events. Unfortunately, many annual book festivals like the LA Times Festival of Books and Ya’llwest went online, were cancelled, or were postponed this year. Lessa and Megan created a one-stop shop where patrons can access all these great events virtually. It may not be quite the same as strolling through the bookstalls on a bright sunny day, but you can still get wonderful book suggestions and hear from your favorite, or soon to be favorite, authors. Check it out at: pvld.org/exploreandmore

Staff worked hard to keep scheduled events going as much as possible and transitioned those that could be moved to online sessions. The first online Fiction Addiction book club had a smaller turnout than usual, with many folks distracted from the book itself and wanting to talk about the current environment and connect with fellow citizens. Deb noted that she did hear from several members regarding the newsletters she sent out, with many letting her know what they were reading, enjoying or not.

Circulation Clerk Susan Deo held two online meetings in April for the Novel Ideas book club -- one for the March book and a second for the April book. The first meeting had 4 participants but the second found 7 joining. Susan says:

“[we had] four online and three via phone call in. We had a good meeting discussing Gingerbread: a Novel by Helen Oyeyemi. This was a bit more upbeat story than our last one, though Oyeyemi is quite "creative" in her story-telling and not your typical fiction novelist. As one reviewer says, "She has a gift for getting readers to not only suspend their disbelief, but to throw it out the window entirely." Another said, "Someone must have given Helen Oyeyemi a handful of magic beans when she was born in Nigeria because she's been planting them ever since."

The team decided that starting in May both book club will be combined to create one PVLD Virtual Book Club where everyone can come together and discuss what they are reading. With the ending of the standalone Novel Ideas book group, I want to say a big thank you to Susan Deo for her dedication to the club and all the hard work she put into it. Thank you Susan!!

April was also National Library Week!
Lessa called or emailed all current participants in our Books by Mail program to check in on them and see if they needed materials as the anticipated library closure extended. She then curated a few selections for each patron and Technical Services Clerks Adan Becerra and Joyce Grauman pulled materials and mailed them out. Thirty-four books were mailed to twelve patrons who were all extremely grateful to receive some distractions from the daily news. Our patrons are being very cautious however. One mentioned how very much she missed her print books but declined a mailing because she had just welcomed a new great-grandbaby into the family. She helps to take care of the infant when the parents need a break and didn’t want to bring in any possible outside contaminants. Even still, it sure was nice to hear about exciting news amidst all the chaos!

Lessa has received many new inquiries about the Books by Mail program and is evaluating and assessing what an expansion of the program might look like for our most vulnerable populations. Once the Safer At Home order is lifted we will be assessing all our library services to see how we sustain them in this new environment of continued health and safety requirements.

With new physical distancing restrictions planned to stay in place for some time, our movie showings are another series of programs under serious consideration. It’s doubtful the library will be able to host large audiences for some time to come so Adult Services Manager Leti Polizzi and Deb are working to transition the Film Newsletter to one that features resources for seniors from both the library and the broader community. This way our patrons will still receive information from the library but also from all the cities on the hill that provide services they might be interested in.

Adult Librarian Dennis Piotrowski created three video tutorials for online resources which have had over 360 views so far. He highlighted Consumer Reports, the most popular video with over 180 views alone, Legal Resources, and Valueline. Nicely done Dennis!

Local History Center

Adult Services Librarian and Archivist Monique Sugimoto’s new initiative invited the community to participate in the Your Story is the Peninsula’s Story collection with photos documenting their experience during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Since its inception almost 40 images have been uploaded showing everything from vacant streets to closure signs to physical distancing birthday gatherings. The program has also gotten a good deal of media coverage and appeared in the PVNews, the online magazine Programming Librarian, was highlighted in the daily update from the City of Rolling Hills Estates and in the monthly roundup for the Society of American Archivists. Monique has now been invited to give a presentation to an Institute of Museum and Library Science (IMLS) funded project for a national cohort of small and rural public libraries working on community memory.
projects and she has gotten a handful of inquiries from other library agencies on how they might create a similar project. Great job Monique!

One recent posting included the social-distancing birthday “party” for a local resident Maude Infantino (seated) who turned 100 years old in April. Keeping 6 feet away from everyone was sure a challenge when at 100, you certainly deserve a big hug!

Monique completed the cataloging of the anonymous donation of archaeological slides on www.palosverdeshistory.org, and made contact with an archaeologist who was part of the original project. Monique is currently researching more information on the Peninsula’s earliest history and I know more great work will come.

Monique made one excursion back to the Peninsula Center Library to pick up and take home the copy stand as she continued digitizing work from home. Part of the work involved teaching her new “coworker” Jeremiah how to use the equipment.

I see the curiosity there, Monique, but you may have a hard time getting him to focus!

Highlights for Kids and Teens

The Young Readers Department has been working very effectively to provide patrons services and materials that can be delivered and enjoyed online. Knowing that the Young Readers webpage is a primary source of information, Librarian Kate Rao made frequent updates this past month. She added, organized, and re-organized sites identified by all the librarians as useful for our patrons, and she created the Artists and Authors at home page which has already received and posted 42 entries.
They will soon be adding another component to the Artists and Authors virtual gallery: Lego and other building block sculptures.

Here is just a small sample of some of the artwork submitted by our Young Artists. Be sure to check out the entire virtual gallery at [www.pvld.org/youngartistsauthors](http://www.pvld.org/youngartistsauthors)

Young Readers librarians created a special edition of the PVLD E-newsletter – Kids Edition - to highlight the “best of the best” sites, ebook platforms and resources, keeping in mind families are still getting used to distance learning. To get the word out they are working on building an email list of patrons interested in getting information on Teen and Kids services at the library.

You can find that newsletter here along with a link to sign up!

As Young Readers Manager Laura Henry reported last month, the librarians also embarked on a new venture: Virtual Storytimes. It can be a complicated process with a variety of aspects to take into consideration. First they need to decide what camera to use: iPhone? Tablet? Webcam? What part of their home can second as a recording studio? Is there enough light? Is there too much background noise? How should they present: live or recorded? Book publishers have been very generous in allowing libraries a lot of leeway in reading their titles online during this crisis, but of course they have requirements to follow... and every publisher is different! Which publishers allow readings on Facebook Live? Some allow posting of videos on a public platform like YouTube, but others don’t. All have requirements that dictate a date when the video must be removed, and they are not necessarily the same dates!

But if you take the time to plan it all out and understand the requirements, it’s well worth it! The librarians presented five virtual storytimes in April that received 900 views! It’s not only the songs and stories that patrons gravitate to, but also the sense of comfort and stability in this very uncertain environment. It keeps the importance of reading and an appreciation for the library a part of a growing child’s mind. Luckily, there are more storytimes recorded and ready to go for May from Librarians Kate and Katrena Woodson and Laura.
This has been a very challenging time for students, parents and teachers and the library is here for their research and reading needs. The Young Reader and Teen Webpages are excellent resources for students and we hope the Kids and Teens newsletter is helpful too! School Outreach Coordinator Michael Barb continues to make contact with principals during the closure and Ridgecrest Intermediate School was particularly glad for the information he sent and included his information in the Ridgecrest weekly update. Librarian Kathleen Johnson noted that the word of mouth is working too!

“I've been eavesdropping on my kids' zoom meetings and most of their teachers have mentioned using the library for ebooks, movies, and research. Today, a 7th grader said she didn't have a library card and the teacher said, "You can get one!"

Great to hear that!

Inspired by Adult Services Librarian Dennis Pietrowski’s awesome online tutorials, Young Readers Librarian Emily Ohara developed a tutorial for one of the most heavily used kids resources: Brainfuse. Meanwhile, Michael will be working on virtual book talks and after he gets the kids fired up with his enthusiasm, he will show and explain how to borrow the ebook from Hoopla, so kids will be able to read the book immediately!

And of course, all PVLD librarians are working on the Summer Reading Program. Given the current environment and the physically distancing requirements, the program may go completely online or be a mixed hybrid, depending on what the situation allows. But don’t worry – so many of the wonderful things we love about Summer Reading will still be there! The reading/activity logs, our super awesome patches and the ever popular Riddle of the Week. This year, Katrena is working on a series of Sherlock Holmes Dancing Man code riddles so make sure to check that out!

And there will be programming too! One of our popular performers, the Science Tellers has already converted their program to a virtual format and many others are working on similar options. The librarians have some great ideas as well, everything from “take and make” crafts, to virtual scavenger hunts to cooking with children’s books.

Assistant Manager and Teen Librarian Louise Beebe and Megan have the Teen Summer Reading program nearly ready to roll, with our popular Amazon gift cards as prizes, and ways for teens to submit reading logs and recommendations virtually. Teens will also enjoy weekly quizzes and the chance to earn raffle tickets!

Peninsula Friends of the Library (PFL) Executive Director Colleen Cotter shared a wonderful surprise. A generous online donor gave $50.00 to the PFL saying, “Thank you so much for your unwavering support of the Living History Museum of African American Heroes!”

An incredible worthy cause – thank you, generous donor!
Social Media Success

The social media team consisting of Lessa, Leti, Megan, Emily and Human Resources Manager Sarah Udin, continues a robust posting schedule with resources, activities, and opportunities for connection in the community on all three platforms. The team has been sharing PVLD’s own resources as well as scouring the internet to share other cool, free things our patrons might love. We’ve also been highlighting staff, positive quotes, mental health resources, and fun places our library cards can go during #SaferAtHome.

One community member felt inspired by our PVLD card travels post and shared a photo of her PVLD library card travelling to her vegetable garden.

Will you take our card on YOUR next adventure?? We’d love to see!

Weekly storytimes also continue to be popular on Facebook and Instagram! Lessa edited more storytimes for the Young Readers department and continues to schedule and premiere them on Thursdays at 10am. It’s definitely obvious our Young Readers librarians are missed. Check out this adorable response to Barney Bear reading aloud to his puppet friends:

Awww…… and now I’m dead from the cuteness.
The numbers show how much our community is staying connected!

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/palosverdeslibrary
24 new followers, 1,100 “likes” and 22 comments.

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pvlibrary
4 new fans “liked” our page, 822 reactions, 61 comments and 59 shares.
We had 100 more users to our Facebook page in April than in March!

Twitter: twitter.com/pvld
15 new followers, 255 engagements, 199 “likes”, 53 retweets and 3 replies.

If you are not already following the library on any or all of our social media platforms
– why not start now?

Circulation and Library Materials

Technical Services Manager Mary Kocman has been getting several reports each week from our main book vendor Brodart. They have been able to pull some of our materials for processing off site but are holding all shipments at this time. Acquisitions Clerk David Ishizaka has been keeping up with all our invoices and has worked out a temporary system with the library managers to have them approved and sent to Finance for processing. This has been especially tricky while everyone is working primary remotely!

Even though we are not physically getting our items, all invoices are being tracked so we can pay now and receive later. Materials vendors are holding most of our shipments or if they have shipped, UPS will hold any boxes for the library until we have more regular hours and staff to receive these items. We’re hoping that will be very soon and we can start receiving, cataloging and shelving new books to be ready for reopening the library.

Library managers are working on creating a reopening procedure with Deputy Director Ryan Roy taking the lead role. Re-opening takes a lot of our regular processes into consideration and tasks that were once quite simple will now be much more involved. For example, accepting materials back into the library is more complicated than simply reopening the book drops, as materials need to be quarantined and disinfected before they can be checked in and shelved. Circulation Manager Ketzie Diaz has been reviewing CDC, IMLS, LA Health Department and CA State Library guidelines on handling paper materials during a pandemic and working with Ryan to devise a plan of attack. Ensuring our staff and volunteers are safe while working with library materials is our main concern. We want the library to open as much as or patrons do, but we need to make sure we do it safely!
In the meantime, Circulation manager Ketzie Diaz has been working to create digital access library cards and update all our patron records with extended due dates. With the extension of the Stay at Home order to May 15th, due dates for all items and all hold pickup dates were extended to June 30th.

From March 13, the day the library closed to April 30, Ketzie created:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Card Applications</th>
<th>579</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Library Cards Created</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Resident Cards</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Non-resident Cards</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Adult Cards</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Child Cards</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library Facilities

Facilities staff continue to be on-site Monday-Friday checking on all of the libraries while we are closed to the public. They are cleaning and sanitizing key areas of the Peninsula Center Library for the small groups of staff that are still coming in during the week, checking on Miraleste and Malaga Cove libraries and ensuring that anyone onsite is safe. Daniel and I both expressed our thanks that our buildings have not seen the vandalism that some other libraries have reported during their closures. We hope this is a good sign of the respect our community has for their local library District!

A number of projects started in April and as per usual, we ran into a few unforeseen issues. Luckily, the time and attention that Daniel has taken to cultivate relationships with our vendors paid off as many saw the challenges the library was facing and either worked with us on pricing or willingly gave services at cost or as a donation. Great job Daniel!

Capping off a major project, Action Contracting finished the restoration of the rotting fascia beams at the Miraleste Library. Even though they found more invasive rot in one location then any of us realized, they were still able to complete the job at the same cost that they had originally quoted. Thank you Action!

Eventually, we will need to paint the rest of the building to match the nice new trim.
The Miraleste Library got a lot of love in April. Not only did it get new fascia beams but the project to re-landscape the hill was also completed! It was a fun progression to watch and Bennett Landscaping did a fantastic job. A BIG thank you to Sean Bennett for donating a PV stone retaining wall. It is absolutely lovely and put a nice final touch on the project.

The project to modernize elevator #4 at the Peninsula Center Library started as well. This has been a particularly delicate project to get started because to pass inspections and get this elevator up to code we had to involve and upgrade some of our other building systems. The old fire alarm system was not able to support the new devices needed per code for the elevator shaft. We also needed to upgrade our access control system (the key card badges staff use to access library areas) so we could limit 2nd floor parking elevator access. Daniel had to do quite a lot of fine tuning and coordinating the schedules with ADT for the access control panel, Red Hawk for the fire alarm system and Next Level Elevator for the elevator refurbishment. The project is finally underway and should be completed by the end of May or early June.

Stages of the Miraleste Library landscaping project. Note the lovely new retaining wall!
Disaster at the Annex!

If a global pandemic and closed libraries weren’t enough – we had a major disaster at the Annex!

Annex Assistant Greg Douglas stopped by the Annex to pick up some personal belongings and immediately reported to Young Readers Manager Laura Henry a dank and soiled smell, reminiscent of mold permeating the space. Daniel investigated and found the Annex covered in mold from what looks to be water intrusion seeping up from the floor and perhaps around the back window frames facing the dirt wall behind the building. With the Annex being right up against a steep hill, water could have been running down and under the Annex weeks prior. Daniel immediately got in contact with the property manager and they inspected the Annex together. The next day a group of library staff surveyed it as well, including Mary Kocman, our onsite expert on material salvage after a disaster.

Unfortunately the news was not good at all.

Immediately upon entering the room we experienced a damp, musty smell and after only a few minutes could feel the heavy moisture in the air. At first it didn’t seem that bad, but it didn’t take long to see, and feel, the damage. Although not particularly visible to the naked eye, the carpet in certain areas was wet to the touch and squelched underfoot.

The entire space showed signs of mold spores, including blooms on the desks, table tops and chairs. The paper collection felt damp, with books and magazines on one particular wall being the worst and having a thick, moist feel to all pages. Mary did not feel any of the paper collection could be safely salvaged. Mold is a particularly insidious fungus that must be caught within 72 hours in order to eradicate successfully. We guess this water intrusion could easily have been 7-10 days old. All book and magazine collections, board games, comics, and manga are lost. Mary estimates we lost approximately $6,000 in materials. With only 40 items currently checked out, the entire collection will basically need to be rebuilt.

← Mold spores on the chairs and tabletops.

A major safety hazard!
There is some good news as it looks like the computers, TVs and gaming consoles survived and the gaming discs can be cleaned, and put in new cases. Information technology Manager Laszlo Latkoczy and his team went in along with Assistant Facilities Manager Vanessa Woods, properly outfitted in PPE’s, and removed all the technology they could. Once removed, equipment was placed in a safe, dry space and was thoroughly cleaned. Facilities, Finance, IT, Technical Services and YR will continue to work out plans to repair and replace the equipment and collection, keeping in mind our primary goal is for the Annex to be a safe and fun place for teens to return to.

← Laszlo keeping safe in the moldy Annex.

Reopening the Annex was already a topic of conversation by the Young Adult team who were concerned about enforcing proper physical distancing in such a small space. This situation forces us to rethink the Annex, the services it provides, and how we can still deliver these services to our community under current physical distance guidelines. We also may think about leasing a different space, especially if the current one stays compromised. I’ll be honest, they would have to completely re-do the whole room, drywall out, for me to feel comfortable inviting our staff and our teen patrons to spend any amount of time there. It’s always been darker space and now you can add wet as well.

Information Technology and Library Website

If there is any silver lining to the libraries being closed, it’s that the IT Department has been able to do upgrades during normal business hours! Information Technician John Jakobsen upgraded the operating system software on all of the patron internet desktops from Microsoft Windows 7 to Windows 10. It was an excellent project to complete during the lockdown and when we re-open and the patrons start using the desktops, we hope they will be pleasantly surprised by the Windows 10 OS.

John worked on a major upgrade of the telephone system, with assistance from our vendor PacketFusion. This included:

- An upgrade of all of the old ShoreTel software to the newer Mitel Application Software.
- Migration of the Mitel Telephony Server. No more Windows 2008 Server OS running on the telephony server; all upgraded to Windows Server 2016. The Mitel Server was also configured with a new IP address.
- New Mitel Connect client software was deployed on staff computers.

Although a few smaller issues still need to be addressed, the majority of the work is done and working great.
John also worked with Joyce and Adan to replace the hardware in the mail room at the Peninsula Center Library. The tech from FP (our mail machine company) was there to help migrate data and load the software. Adan reports that they found a way to save addresses and old data about postage which is a great help to those who work in the mail room.

Information Technician Brett LaForest was busy as well. Phase I (of 2 phases) was completed for cleaning up the IDF (Intermediate Distribution Frame) Room at the Miraleste Library. With the assistance of the Facilities Department, John and Brett took out the old rack from the IDF and placed a new rack in the room, then placed the equipment (server, switch, router, UPS) back into the new rack. The next phase will include organizing/replacing the cables in the room. This is a great example of how our IT and Facilities teams work together!

Brett was able to complete a vast array of upgrades including updates to our firewall, our routine servers, the RPTG, the Nakivo backup, the VMware VCenter. He also deployed Skyline, a product that allows for active monitoring of our virtual infrastructure by VMware and streamlined support. He cleaned up the cabling in IDF1 at the Peninsula Center Library and configured the new UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) unit at the Miraleste Library. He also upgraded the wireless at the Annex, before the flood damage.

These are the guys that keep it all going and having the chance to work uninterrupted certainly made it a little easier to schedule all these projects! Thank you John and Brett!

Digital Services Manager David Campbell and Digital Service Librarian Erik Adams have stayed busy with continuous contact updates and contributions to our webpage. Our digital service resources are getting a real workout as well. The very popular Overdrive, Kanopy, and Hoopla all hit new highs for monthly checkouts in April.
Downloads By the Number:

**Kanopy – streaming video offering films and documentaries**
2,933 plays and 10,273 visits to the website

**Overdrive – downloadable ebooks, audiobooks and magazines**
7,431 checkouts

**Hoopla – streaming audiobooks, ebooks, music, comics, movies and TV**
2,770 checkouts

---

**Professional Development for ALL – Remotely!**

The beginning of the month, the entire circulation department, all 22 of them, “met” on a conference call to discuss the many webinars they had listened to in March, to talk about what reopening might eventually look like, and just hear each other’s voices. Ketzie shared how great it was to hear everyone’s ideas on kindness, empathy, mindfulness, going fine free, and implicit bias, and how all of that applies to our work but especially when we reopen and how we will continue to work with patrons in that changed environment.

Laura H. encouraged the Young Readers librarians to explore professional development opportunities and did they ever! Collectively they attended 50 webinars, online book festivals, author talks, children’s services training and business trainings. Branch library staff and the Adult Services team did the same thing and the list below is just a SAMPLE of the sessions our librarians have been attending:
In addition to attending her fair share of workshops, Lessa participated in two full days of American Library Association (ALA) Executive Board meetings and two additional days of ALA Budget and Review Analysis meetings. Both of these group meetings were scheduled to take place in Chicago during the Annual American Library Association Annual conference, which was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19. Lessa attended the APALA Executive Board meeting as Executive Director and the ALA ODLOS Advisory Committee and Sustainability Round Table Coordinating Committee meetings as their ALA EB Liaison. She also chaired a meeting of the ALA Steering Committee on
Organizational Effectiveness and assessed 40 applications as an ALA Spectrum Scholarship juror. The work Lessa does for our profession is amazing and we’re thankful she is part of our library team!

**Administration and Finance**

Our last Board of Library Trustee meeting was held via video conference and the May one will be as well. We’ve added information to the website on how the public can access the meeting and am pleased to say we’ve had a lot more attendance for the virtual meetings. It’s actually easier for many folks to watch from home than it is to physically visit the library at 7 pm on a weeknight.

Sarah continued to work with meeting room reservations for April, May, and other months to coordinate cancelations due to the library closure and overall organization/event postponement. In total, 59 events were cancelled/postponed in April and 35 events have been cancelled/postponed in May (so far). Luckily, we’ve been able to reschedule or credit most meeting room rental events and to date we have refunded 19 reservations at $3,835.00. Unfortunately, the passport offices remain closed at all branches meaning no income there.

Finance Manager Will Liu is doing an outstanding job assessing our finances, including reviewing how we structure our budget, plan for expenditures, document disbursements, pay invoices, submit reimbursements, and just about every other aspect of the finance department. He’s also identified areas of cost savings for the District in an amount over $15,000 per year. He creates and prints his own budgets, is proactive in managing our CIP credits, has eliminated COI’s that are no longer applicable and changed our company credits cards to ones that offer rewards points.

I am certainly thankful that Will is part to our team as PVLD deals with some serious budget challenges in the years ahead. The Palos Verdes Library District has always balanced our budgets, but we haven’t been as attentive as we could have to saving money for facility maintenance and improvements and have two major projects that are unfunded – a new HVAC system and roof repairs at the Peninsula Center Library. Our fiscal year 20/21 budget was going to be a stressful one…and then COVID-19 hit and our libraries closed.

Closing the library was the right thing to do but we will see a significant loss of internal revenue. With rental rooms, passport processing, exam proctoring, rental books, fines and fees revenue all gone, we estimate a total loss of approximately $35,000 a month. During this closure we paid our staff and as noted earlier, they have continued to do absolutely amazing work! From all the online content creation to expending professional development, the PVLD staff have been dedicated and committed to bettering themselves and serving this community. But as the Safer At Home order was extended further and further out, and we didn’t see the library opening to the public any time soon we had to think of the overall financial health of the District and make some very hard decisions. The worst of which was to furlough library staff.
Difficult Decisions and Moving Forward

Our management team met with our union, Local SEIU 721 multiple times throughout the month to work on a staff furlough plan. Ultimately it was agreed that all employees would continue to receive pay for regularly scheduled work through April 30 and would participate in furloughs beginning on May 1, 2020. Full time staff are being placed on a one week furlough for the month of May while all part time staff are being furloughed until further notice. The roll out of furloughs was a complex one and the management team worked hard to extend information and options to staff as quickly as possible.

This was by far the most difficult decision I have had to make as a Director and I am forever thankful of the PVLD team and how they stepped up to help as much as they possibly could. A heartfelt thank you to Sarah Udin and Payroll and Benefits Analyst Jennifer Valladares for their tireless commitment to serving our staff during this challenging time.

It’s my goal to reopen all of our libraries and bring our staff back as soon as it is safe to do so. We are currently in the process of creating a reopening plan with protocols that lay out how we can provide library services while maintaining a safe environment for our staff and our patrons. We are assessing how to most effectively clean and sanitize our buildings and materials; establishing new policies for physical distancing in our library spaces; evaluating how we can safely open the Community Room, Gallery, conference room and other rentable spaces again and to what capacity. A great deal goes into these decisions and we are taking the time needed to ensure that we are making safe choices for how to best re-open the library.

As we establish rules for this “new normal” I hope you will be patient with our staff, our wonderful volunteers and your fellow library lovers. This pandemic will not be gone in days, weeks or months and as we adjust how we live with each other I have found that empathy and compassion serves me very well.

I can’t wait to welcome you all back to our libraries with open arms – at a safe distance of course!

~ Check out our online services at Your Library at Home at www.pvld.org ~