

1/18/22 Meeting Minutes for the NJLA Reference & Adult Services Section

10am-11am

- **Welcome: a quorum in attendance for vote and meeting;**
Attendees:
Kate Russo (host), Theresa Agostinelli, Janet Birkhead, Karen Vaias, Eric Schwarz, Teresa Carson, and Lisa Bruckman (taking minutes, with help by attendees).
- **Review of [September minutes](#)**
- The Minutes were approved by Kate Russo at 10:02 am.
-
- **Introductions**
- **Bylaws & Constitution**
 - **Our revised Bylaws and Constitution was unanimously approved!**
- **[Information Equity Conference](#)**
- **NJLA Conference Proposals - Kate Russo**
Not Accepted
- -Revise and resubmit next year:
Databases: Tips and Tricks and Something New
-Approved:
Effective Presentation Skills: Practical Tips for Success; Thursday, June 2, 4:10-5:00 PM, Wildwood 6 & 7
Something's Got to Give: When to Say No, and How; Friday, June 3, 2:10-3:00 PM, Wildwood 10 & 11
- **Discussion**
 - **How is everyone doing? How are things going at your library? What programs/projects are you working on?**
 - Kate Russo shared that Galen presented Jazz and Civil Rights via Zoom at South River Public Library. "Flute Juice Productions is a musical entertainment company, located in Orlando, Florida. We provide music entertainment and lectures to colleges and universities. Our featured artist is Galen Abdur-Razzaq." <https://flutejuice.net/>
 - Karen Vaias mentioned that Bernards Township Library and the rest of the MAIN Consortium are in the process of moving from cloudLibrary to Libby/OverDrive for their eContent platform
 - Janet Birkhead shared that, after a period of being open to the public, the Long Branch Free Public Library has gone back to being closed to the public but providing curbside delivery. She wears a paper mask but has developed a new appreciation for having a desk that faces a wall because she can remove or lower the mask when not interacting with other staff members or the public. Most of the library's programs for adults are or can be made virtual, but Janet is not sure about the Children's Department's programs. She stated that she knows

that some members of her book club will not be happy about reverting to a virtual book club.

- A major project for Janet last month was pulling books from the “New Books” shelf that are no longer new (9 months for biographies and memoirs; 6 months for all other nonfiction). Since she is not counting months that the library was closed, this is the first time since the pandemic began that there have been more than a handful of books to pull. Janet follows the practice of checking the circulation of each book, calculating the average circulation of all of the books pulled off the “New Books” shelf, and making a note of the “library best sellers.” She types up a list of the titles, including the circulation per month, to inform future purchases. Books that came off the New Books’ section in December came to 13 ½ pages (double-spaced), compared to an average of 3 ½ pages before the pandemic. She generally reports the average circulation and the “best sellers” to the director and occasionally takes a detailed look at a specific subject area.
- The major programs that Janet runs include the Nonfiction Book Club, a virtual book chat centered around a theme, and mental health programs. Last month’s book club meeting was a hybrid, with one person attending virtually and 11 in person. The meeting included a holiday party for those able to attend in person. (December and June meetings include a party.) This year’s suicide awareness program, which will be held during Suicide Prevention Month in September, will be the Long Branch Free Public Library’s third annual suicide awareness program. Janet has not yet begun the work of lining up a panel.
- Janet began the Nonfiction Book Club in 2008. It runs from September through June, with July and August off. She takes suggestions from book club members and adds them to titles recommended on BookBub. After making sure that each title listed on the ballot is of a reasonable length and that there are enough copies available on interlibrary loan from within the Libraries of Middlesex Consortium, she submits the ballots to book club members and asks them to vote on the books to be discussed in the following September-through-June season. She currently has one adult attending who does not read at an adult level. She tries to get a book on CD for him, but, since the selections were made before he joined, this is not always possible. She has promised him that she will only include books available on CD on the ballot going forward.
- Lisa mentioned that Bloomfield Public Library has a NonFiction Book Club run by the Head of the Reference Department, Linda Pendergrass, and that she would forward Linda’s contact information to Janet (after checking with Linda when working next on Saturday, Jan. 22nd) if Janet is interested in comparing notes on her experiences with facilitating NonFiction Book Club meetings with Linda. (Lisa emailed Janet after Linda approved the contact information share.)
- Eric, Lisa (and others?) suggested including graphic novels on the book club’s reading list. Janet noted that, during the brief period when she ordered graphic novels, she made sure to include Maus but stated that she is no longer responsible for ordering graphic novels. Her one experiment with graphic novels

for the Nonfiction Book Club was a prequel to Sandman that turned out to require familiarity with the other graphic novels in the series. The discussion of graphic novels continued, with suggestions of Sapiens. A Graphic History: the Birth of Humankind - now in 2 volumes but first translated into French and English from an original Hebrew edition (2011) and George Takei's They Called Us Enemy. Lisa commented that Art Spiegelman, author of Maus, has written other graphic novels: that Maus has been followed by Maus II (an edition titled, The Complete Maus has combined both I and II -

https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Maus-Art-Spiegelman/dp/0679406417/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3MO1DHDNWNWD&keywords=maus+art+spiegelman&qid=1643491100&s=books&sprefix=maus%2Cstripbooks%2C100&sr=1-1) and Art

Spiegelman had published a graphic anthology in 2004, In the Shadow of No Towers

(https://www.amazon.com/Shadow-No-Towers/dp/0241463971/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=) among others - in New York City on 9/11

Lisa also pointed out that the Summit Public Library has a great graphic novel collection (in both their Youth Services Department and Adult Services

Department). Links were provided in the chat to George Takei's graphic novel at

<https://www.amazon.com/They-Called-Us-Enemy-George-Takei/dp/1603094504>

and to a list of graphic novels published by Penguin Books/Random House –

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/series/IMA/march>. Eric sent Janet a list of [40 books at Englewood Public Library that are listed as nonfiction graphic novels for adults](#). It does not include They Called Us Enemy (which is incorrectly cataloged as an adult fiction graphic novel), or the March series, which are listed as YA graphic novels (fiction), which also seems incorrect because it is more of a graphic memoir of John Lewis.

- Lisa shared for Janet's benefit that Summit Free Public Library has two Collections which might provide meaty discussion for Janet's NonFiction Book Club (Young Adult and Adult Graphic Novels), and each of these may provide meaty subject matter that might offer a subject appealing to an adult group of Nonfiction readers. Lisa's advice is to look at the Catalog and scan the results of these two filtered searches. For example, a YA graphic novel listed in this search after reading the results I discovered is Redbone: the True Story of a Native American Rock Band (2020), (<https://catalog.summitlibrary.org:8480/#section=resource&resourceid=776779904¤tIndex=1&view=fullDetailsDetailsTab>) (I searched using an "All Text" search with [graphic novel] and further filtered by "Collection" (YA or Adult Graphic Novel), and further can be filtered by Subject; reset and filtered for the other Collection focused on). Of course, you probably should target the classic graphic novels like Persepolis I, II or Maus I, II or a sampling of manga which I need to read - I've only read the very short Junji Ito classic Yon & Mu (Best known for his **horror manga** Tomie, Lovesick Dead, Uzumaki, and Souichi, Ito was approached by his editor to write a manga about cats - from the Wikipedia article on Yon & Mu: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junji_Ito%27s_Cat_Diary:_Yon_%26_Mu).

Lisa is newer to the YA Graphic Novel but is a fan of the Juvenile Graphic Novel series of Dav Pilkey (Captain Underpants) and was introduced to the Graphic Novel studying Young Adult Literature and Children's Literature in two RU classes - and finds they answer an inherent need to transfer from a love of picture books, the merger of image and text. Some graphic novels have almost no text as well, like *Robo Sapiens* which won a Japanese Media award in 2020 and is elegantly styled after Peter Max illustrations in her opinion (illustrator for the Beatles album *Yellow Submarine*). (Ann-Marie Aymer of Summit library is the genius behind the development of their YA Collection I think.)

- Janet talked about her realization one night, in the middle of the night, that she had never seen anyone with a visible disability attending one of the Long Branch Free Public Library's programs that wasn't about disabilities. After making some suggestions to Director Tonya Garcia, Janet reached out to Stan Soden, her contact at MOCEANS, a local disability rights organization. He gave her the name of MOCEANS' director, Susan Mazzeo. Janet discussed with both Stan and Ms. Mazzeo the question of what prevents people with disabilities from attending library programs. Janet suspects that the major impediment, beyond not knowing what programs are being offered, is transportation. From her conversation with Stan, she learned that the AccessLink bus follows the regular NJ Transit route. So it is useless for people with disabilities who do not live near the bus route. The other service available to people with disabilities only provides transportation to doctors' appointments. Janet emailed the January program flyer to Ms. Mazzeo and will follow up with both Stan and Ms. Mazzeo.
- During the discussion of the date for the next Zoom meeting, Janet mentioned preferring a day other than Tuesday because that is her assigned day to work on the book order. Selectors share one login to Baker & Taylor and, to avoid multiple people trying to access Baker & Taylor at one time, Director Tonya Garcia assigned a day of the week to each selector. Karen informed Janet that it is possible to get multiple logins for Baker & Taylor and put her email address in Chat so that Janet can follow up. Janet will talk to Tonya Garcia about adding more logins and find out whether there is still a reason for sharing the same login.
- Eric shared that Englewood Public Library reopened in 2020 and reopened computer access in early to mid 2021 and has remained open (except closed for a few days because of lack of heat). Masks and temperature checks are required of everyone (patrons and staff). Staff must check off a COVID self-check each day of work. A few programs have been in person in Englewood, but most have been virtual. Clarence Dillon Public Library has remained open since mid-2020 with public computer access. Masks were required for some time but for several months at least have not been required. Staff must fill out a COVID self-check form each day of work. The cafe (serving coffee and tea) reopened Dec. 6, 2021. The free book cart (people can take or leave donations there) reopened in November 2021.

- Lisa shared that Newark Public Library had closed due to the Omicron third wave of COVID19 illness on Dec. 22nd, 2021, and had later moved the original reopening date after New Years Day, 2022, to Jan 10th, Monday. Similarly, Bloomfield Public Library also reopened on Monday, Jan 10th, after closure when the number of NJ confirmed cases spiked on Wed, Dec 29th, 2021. Summit Free Public Library had never closed in reaction to the Omicron variant third wave of COVID19 cases overwhelming NJ residents and healthcare facilities. Masks are mandatory for all visitors in all three urban libraries.
- Announcements
- Future Section Meetings
 - Volunteers to present or moderate on different topics for a portion of a meeting.
 - What topics would you like to see addressed?
 - Next meeting- Tuesday, February 22nd at 10am