



EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH
LIBRARY

2020

East Baton Rouge Parish Library Highlights for 2020

- Library services and programs were heavily impacted by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. All locations closed to the public on March 17, 2020.
- Drive-through service resumed on May 20; libraries re-opened to the patrons on June 1, 2020 with occupancy limits, social distancing, and reduced service hours to allow for deep cleaning and to accommodate staff shortages due to quarantine.
- Due to COVID, overall Circulation decreased by 26 % to 2,283,728 items in 2020. Digital Circulation rose to 1,047,565 and accounted for most of the usage for several months.
- The overall visitor Gate Count dropped 60 % to 914,531; of this, 29,336 patrons made Drive-through, curb-side or lobby visits. Renovation disruptions at River Center and Jones Creek and Greenwell Springs further impacted the number of patrons visiting these branches.
- The Library's Collections remain stable, comprising more than 2 million items. Major new additions to the collection included several distinct collections for the BR Room's Archive (including the Arts Council of Baton Rouge) and special online resources such as Udemy, AtoZ Food America, Tumble Math, Chilton Library, Pass It Down, Homelessness Training Institute and Beanstack. BR City Key Website was updated to include COVID and food disparities.
- 15,481 new library cards were issued in 2020. The total Patron Count increased to 273,355; this is 63 % of the parish population. Computer-Use-Only cards were issued over the phone due to COVID and several school districts worked with Circulation staff to create cards for students.
- Library staff produced 5,995 programming events and activities, with an estimated 186,417 people participating. Of these, 249 were Virtual programs with 46,030 viewers. 9,380 patrons participated in 647 Self-Directed Activities such as Grab and Geaux Bags. Highlights for the year: One Book One Community featuring Americanah; the Virtual Mid-City Micro Con; the virtual 7th Annual BR Mini-Maker Faire®; the 43rd Annual Author Illustrator Program featuring author Candace Fleming. Beanstack provided a virtual Summer Reading Club platform. A new cohort of children "graduated" from 1000 Books Before Kindergarten; other Special Literacy Projects included the new Reading is Elementary program, which enrolled 1,289 children, the Literacy Calendar, Cultural Gumbo series, and working with the City of Baker to expand Garden Stories to Baker City Park. We continued hosting LPB's Ready to Learn pilot with Molly of Denali! at the Carver Branch Library and were selected as a Maker-Ed pilot site by Knock Knock Children's Museum. The Library continued its participation in the Urban Library Council's Entrepreneurship Pilot Project.

- Reference/information questions dropped to 970,069. The Library maintained telephone and online reference during the Stay-At-Home period.
- Database sessions rose by 6.6 %. Website activity showed significant increases, with activity related to the Library website up 26 %. Views and retrievals rose dramatically by 265 %, as patrons searched the catalog and accessed databases remotely.
- Recording 692,248 logins, the Library's Wi-Fi was extended out into parking lots or public spaces at all locations during the pandemic.
- Meeting Rooms were used 1,406 times with an estimated 24,687 in attendance; meeting room usage resumed on a limited basis in the fall.
- Study Rooms at Main, Baker, Bluebonnet, Delmont Gardens, Fairwood, and Greenwell Springs were used 4,956 times prior to the pandemic. Once the Library re-opened, these rooms were reserved for storage of quarantine materials or furniture, and with few exceptions, were not available to patrons.
- Outreach Service visits recorded 1,142 stops at pre-schools and day care centers, retirement centers, schools, and events.
- Interactive Learning tables were ordered for all branches beyond the 3 pilot sites, however due to COVID, tables were not placed on the public floor.
- An architect was selected for the new South Branch Library and work began on the Concept Design in fall 2020.
- The River Center Branch construction project was completed in spring 2020; it opened to the public on June 26, 2020.
- Construction at the Greenwell Springs Branch was completed in the summer of 2020. Furniture and technology was installed through the fall of 2020.
- Major construction components of the Jones Creek Regional Branch were completed in the fall of 2020; a variety of important details including furniture installations are being addressed in first quarter of 2021.