What an amazing, unexpected, unprecedented year! The elimination of overdue fines in January 2020 contributed to the highest two months of circulation in Mesa County Libraries’ history and increased access to the library. Then a pandemic hit the world, causing massive disruption.

Library staff shifted quickly to keep core services going with the addition of curbside holds pick-up, online library cards, expanded digital collections, and virtual programming produced in the library’s 970West Studio.

The elimination of in-person programs resulted in a 50% drop in library visits, contributing to a loss of community connection. Yet the library’s signature events — Summer Reading, Comic Con, and Culture Fest — continued in new, different online formats. New ways of serving patrons emerged, including the creation of popular Take and Make kits for all ages and the evolution of the Discovery Garden, which brought joy (and food) to visitors.

Finally, the new Clifton Branch Building Project worked with the CU-Denver University Technical Assistance Program on conceptual designs. While the work was done virtually, the community gave feedback on the progress in December. In 2021, the library will hire an architect and begin a capital campaign. This building project was a positive focus for the library in 2020.

Happily, the new Clifton Branch building will not result in increased taxes for the community. The library district has been saving for this project, and a significant portion will be funded through private donations and grants.

Michelle Boisvenue-Fox
Library Director
## Fine-Free in 2020

Overdue fines were eliminated Jan. 1, 2020, removing a barrier for many patrons.

- **20%** no longer felt apprehensive about library use
- **17%** checked out more materials
- **23%** kept materials longer

### PATRON COMMENTS:

- *Takes the stress out of checking out books, especially with kiddos!*

- *Fear of fines should not keep people from borrowing and reading books.*

- *I stopped using the library until I heard you eliminated overdue fines.*

- *It’s really opened us up to using the library more!*

## Pandemic Recap

The library closed twice in 2020 due to the pandemic: March 15–June 7, and Nov. 23-Jan. 18, 2021. The pandemic’s effects were profound:

- Library visits fell **56%**.
- Ebook checkouts increased **39%**.
- Programming moved offline, attracting **12,569 1-minute views**.
- Curbside holds pick-up began May 4 at all locations, serving **14,230 patrons** by year-end.
- In a survey, patrons said they missed browsing, taking kids to the library, and a sense of community during the closures.
- Via remote learning, **85%** of Adult Learning Center students continued their studies despite building closures.

## Did You Know?

- **10 students** completed **GED** and **Career Online High School programs through the library.**
- **Six** imaginative sculpture benches created by **local artists** were installed in the Discovery Garden.
- The library **added** to the collection nearly **1,100 titles** suggested by patrons.
- New **Take and Make craft kits** proved **popular with all ages.**
- Patrons watched more than **22,000 streaming video titles** on Kanopy. Most popular was “Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus” based on the book by Mo Willems.
- **Volunteers** contributed **6,629 hours** of their time. Thank you!

### Key Stats

- **Electronic Circulation** = 230,824
- **Adult Student Hours** = 16,037
- **Social Media Followers** = 61,827
- **Library Cardholders** = 76,215
- **Checkouts & Renewals** = 1,062,056
- **Library Visits** = 322,232

### Library Board of Trustees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barry Blanchard</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Cyphers</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Mahre</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine Barnett</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean DiDario</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abby Landmeier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candice Walton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Library Leadership

- Michelle Boisvenue-Fox - Library Director
- Shana Wade - Associate Director
- Blair Wade - Finance Director
- Karen Killianxja - Development Director

### Contact Mesa County Libraries

970-243-4442 • mesacountylibraries.org