

Friday email

From: rmeyer@decaturlibrary.org
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Folder: jhill@decaturlibrary.org/jhill@decaturlibrary.org/INBOX
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Good afternoon,

Hey I can type again....

I know this is long, but if you have questions about the topic, please read the whole thing.

1. **Clarification regarding masks, vaccinations, symptom checks etc.**---These issues came up during one of the staff-only meetings on Tuesday, so I thought it best to clarify all at once.
 - a. Regarding masks and vaccinations: At this time no Decatur Public Library employee is required to receive a COVID vaccination. But if you choose to do so, *and* choose to share that information with library administration, you may choose to not wear a mask. You may also choose to continue to wear a mask. Given these facts, you cannot assume that because someone is wearing a mask that they are unvaccinated. They may be fully vaccinated and choose to wear a mask. Or may be fully vaccinated and choose not to share that information and therefore be required to wear a mask. Or they may have chosen not to get vaccinated and therefore be required to wear a mask. So please do not think that you can make any determination of vaccination status based on the fact that someone is wearing a mask.
 - b. It was asked: who is enforcing this? The short answer is that I am---because the fewer people have this medical information the better, even though our attorney advises that the information could be shared with Division Heads about the staff that they supervise. As of today, I am choosing to not do that. So, a couple of weeks ago I reached out to everyone for whom we did not have proof of vaccination and reminded them of the state and city mandates to wear a mask unless fully vaccinated. I made no assumptions about vaccination status when doing so.
 - c. What about patrons? When I reached out to the City of Decatur for guidance on this, as directed by the Board of Trustees, I was advised that there was no practical enforcement mechanism for patrons, but there is for staff and every effort should be made to do so. I understand that this may seem unfair. But, at this point in time, that is the way it has to be.
 - d. What about the symptom checker? “ I have chronic (aches and pains, headaches, etc.) and so if I report that, I will be sent home. Or I have to lie.” I have thought about this a lot and there are some good points here. I will tell you that the Health Department is telling us that the symptom checker, while not currently required, is the best practice for the time being. So we will continue to do it, but I would like to make some points more clear and make some modifications. First, I know that sometimes you may forget to do one (I now have to pause and do my afternoon one.....). Please do your best to remember, but missing an occasional one is not the end of the world. Second, I would like to alter the instructions for muscle or headache question. I you are experiencing one of these symptoms, and it can be explained by a chronic or occasional condition known to you please answer no. Please approach the ‘other symptoms’ question the same way. Also, if you just went to the gym yesterday and lifted weights for the first time in years—that is a very simple explanation for muscle aches and need not be reported. However, please take all the other questions literally. There have been too many instances of people explaining away respiratory symptoms as due to allergies, for instance, and turned out to be COVID positive. I will cover the last point in the next section.

- e. What happens if I say yes to any of the questions? Keeping in mind the above guidelines, if you answer yes to any of the questions above, mandatory COVID quarantine protocols will begin. IF, you have not provided proof of being fully vaccinated. If you HAVE provided proof of vaccination, checking one or more symptoms will not automatically result in mandatory quarantine, although we may ask you go home until symptoms subside. But if you have shared proof of vaccination and report one or more symptoms AND close contact with someone who is COVID positive, the protocol will be triggered. So, for those who have not provided proof of vaccination, quarantine protocol will be triggered by symptoms OR close contact. If you have provided us with proof of vaccination, quarantine will be triggered with symptom AND close contact.
 - f. If I am sent home will I have emergency sick time? Emergency COVID sick time lapsed on June 30. I should have asked the Board to reconsider but have not yet. I will do so in August and if the Board approves, we can retroactively credit sick time back to anyone required to quarantine by the library, provided that this is the route the Board wants to go.
2. **Decatur Celebration Closure**---Since the Celebration was canceled, the library will remain open those days. However, I did tell you all that August 7 would be a holiday this year. In the spirit of fairness, I have decided to provide all full-timers with 8 extra hours of holiday pay, and all part-timers with 4 extra hours of holiday pay. Please stay tuned for details. I still hope to have an in-service day this year—probably in the fall.
 3. **Library Closure**---I do not have a date yet, but Ameren and Burdick need to do some work on gas lines and the gas meter in the library. Unless it can be done at night or on a Sunday, both of which are unlikely, the library will close for the day. Everyone scheduled to work inside the building on whatever day it ends up being will be given granted leave for their scheduled time. Anyone not scheduled to work inside the building will not receive any extra time off. We hope to have at least two weeks' notice prior to the closure.
 4. **Friends of the Library**—They will be vacating their sale room by early October. While several options are being considered in both the short and long term, no final decision has been made. They will continue to have the sorting area and pallet storage area. Please do not make any assumptions about where they will land---this is a decision that library administration, Board of Trustees, City of Decatur, and the Friends Board will make together.
 5. **Summer Reading**---As most of you read, SRP demolished their reading goal and did so early. While numbers are not up to 2019 standards, June was the highest overall circulation at the library in about a year and a half. Bravo to PRS staff for once again, designing great SRPs under difficult circumstances. Worth noting: the library did not this year purchase the iRead theme, but it was done in-house. I sometimes point out one person only to find multiple people had a hand---so I'll let you guys give each other individual kudos by using reply all.
 6. **What Robert Said**—Hats off to Betti Jo and Michelle (and hey, Robert taught them) for completing the first payroll. Getting paid the right amount, and on time, is super important to all of us. While we're at it--Robert picked up that ball last year after Joann left and carried it all this time, in addition to his many other duties.
 7. **Speaking of Robert**—Next week will be his last one as our Assistant City Librarian and Circulation Manager. I don't have anything more to add that hasn't already been said, but again want to say thanks for your 29 years of dedicated service. Please remember that Wednesday is his open house send-off. I've been asked about the invitation that staff received last week: Is 3:30-4 the only time staff can attend? No, if the 4-6 timeframe works better for you and staffing allows, you may attend at that time. The SRC (and I) thought it would be good if staff had at least some opportunity to mingle and say their goodbyes to Robert without the general public in attendance. So in that spirit, that 3:30-4 time slot is ONLY for staff, but staff are welcome later as well.
 8. **Recycling**—I am told by Mike Pritchett that recycling WILL be reinstated—but we do not yet know exactly when.

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I'm sure that there are many other things to discuss (like some really cool programs coming up) but this is already super long. Feel free to use reply all and give each other shout-outs, etc. And next week I will tell you about our Community Resource Coordinator Jess Hill teaching a class on Social Work and Libraries in China---via streaming video.

Thanks and have a great weekend,

Rick Meyer
City Librarian
Decatur Public Library
130 N. Franklin St.
Decatur, IL 62523
P:217.421.9713



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