

**Effingham Public Library
Usage Report
Fall 2021**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that took hold in March 2020, Effingham Public Library has had to re-evaluate all services based on shifting user needs and perceptions of library service. While we closed our doors completely for about 6 weeks during the start of the pandemic, we have been adding back hours and services and were back to “full service” and hours as of February 2021. However, since that time, we have not seen patrons return to the building and services in the same manner or volume as we had previously experienced. You can see in this chart a snapshot of several different months/years representing our prime services and how they have changed and recovered (or not) as we begin the slow exit from the pandemic.

| | June 2017 | June 2018 | June 2019 | June 2020 | June 2021 |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Circulation | 24,088 | 26,452 | 26,080 | 8,893 | 22,859 |
| Library Cards | 81 | 59 | 65 | 21 | 46 |
| Adult Programs | 9 | 11 | 16 | 3 | 12 |
| Adult Attendance | 146 | 149 | 489 | 45 | 309 |
| YS Programs | 53 | 68 | 69 | 32 | 39 |
| YS Attendance | 2,076 | 2,645 | 2,097 | 1,836 | 1,442 |
| Meeting Rooms | 11 | 23 | 32 | 0 | 15 |
| Computer Use | 1,556 | 1,571 | 1,237 | 128 | 730 |
| Wifi Use | N/A | 5,133 | 5,087 | 3,775 | 4,294 |

| | Oct. 2017 | Oct. 2018 | Oct. 2019 | Oct. 2020 | Oct. 2021 |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Circulation | 20,826 | 22,539 | 23,309 | 13,734 | 18,541 |
| Library Cards | 52 | 48 | 38 | 19 | 38 |
| Adult Programs | 13 | 12 | 23 | 18 | 18 |
| Adult Attendance | 159 | 304 | 480 | 372 | 292 |
| YS Programs | 17 | 38 | 50 | 23 | 47 |
| YS Attendance | 777 | 854 | 1,040 | 431 | 778 |
| Meeting Rooms | 29 | 34 | 41 | 1 | 22 |
| Computer Use | 1,333 | 1,389 | 1,240 | 569 | 593 |
| Wifi Use | N/A | 5,189 | 4,276 | 2,978 | 2,410 |

| | FY2018 | FY2019 | FY2020 | FY2021 | FY2022 To Date |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Circulation | 253,454 | 269,744 | 254,732 | 155,917 | 119,763 |
| Library Cards | 624 | 534 | 474 | 240 | 244 |
| Adult Programs | 132 | 129 | 174 | 101 | 77 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Adult Attendance | 1,920 | 2,983 | 3,567 | 2,635 | 1,772 |
| YS Programs | 269 | 485 | 456 | 271 | 219 |
| YS Attendance | 9,402 | 15,879 | 15,304 | 8,177 | 5,521 |
| Meeting Rooms | 233 | 335 | 356 | 14 | 85 |
| Computer Use | 16,141 | 16,237 | 12,542 | 5,569 | 3,900 |
| Wifi Use | N/A | 47,414 | 47,988 | 36,253 | 21,366 |

June represents our biggest and most active month—it is when Summer Read kicks off and we by far have the highest attendance. October represents a more “typical” month—there are usually a steady number of programs and attendance with no big events or holidays to impact service schedules.

As you can see above, some areas are recovering well—adult program attendance would be a good example as it is nearly recovered to FY19 levels. Youth Services attendance is lagging behind and will likely finish the year at above FY18 levels, but not to FY19.

Circulation is projected to finish with around 228,000 circs for FY22 (given an average circ of 18,000/month), which still has us below FY18, and is certainly concerning. Our growth had been steady and consistent for 15 years coming into FY20 and recovering from this massive drop in usage has been hard.

While it’s true that the pandemic is not over, the perception within the community appears to be one of being able to navigate the challenges that arise from the pandemic and finding a way to co-exist with the risks associated with COVID-19. Given this, we can assume that for at least the next couple of years, people’s general usage of the library is not subject to change. Things have changed in how people interact with the world and meeting those changes can create challenges, but also new opportunities.

While usage of our resources is one factor in our overall success and usefulness as a library, it’s not the only thing. Below are several different metrics that were gathered to better understand how and when people use our services.

Daily door counts

One of our most basic indicators of usage is our daily door counts. This counts how many people come into our building each day. We are seeing the trend of door counts improve each month. We only have monthly data going back to 2019, but during September and October of 2019, we averaged at least 400 people per day. In 2021, we are back to at least 250 per day, so we are nearing 60% of our previous capacity.

| | Total Door Count |
|----------------|------------------|
| September 2019 | 10,421 |
| September 2020 | 4,688 |
| September 2021 | 6,481 |

| | Total Door Count |
|--------------|------------------|
| October 2019 | 11,043 |
| October 2020 | 3,996 |
| October 2021 | 6,704 |

Heat/Usage Mapping

Appendix A shows the daily counts for each of the 12 days we did heat mapping. This represents the different types of usage throughout each day, based on the hour that we observed people. We have more detailed data, down to where specifically the usage was, but these charts will give a sense of when the most activity was happening in the building.

Heat mapping was used for two different weeks: October 11 – October 16 and November 1 – November 6. Staff were to mark at least once every 30 minutes where all non-employees were located in the building. If possible, they were asked to record each time they saw someone move to a new area during that 30 minute period. This provides us with real time information about how much use is happening during a given time period.

Peak usage times were definitely noted. On most days, there's a steady rise until lunch time (with a spike at lunch nearly every day), a decline during the afternoon hours, a sharp rise after school and then a sharp drop after 6pm. Exceptions to these spikes are typically explained by room rentals or library programming.

Spikes in the evening are related to room rentals from outside groups. Those have been noted for each graph, including total foot traffic they brought in. Without these assorted spikes from room rentals, we do not have a lot of foot traffic in the evening past 6 pm. Additionally, when we have library programming, there is a spike in foot traffic, though regardless of source of the room booking, it does not appear to relate to additional library usage.

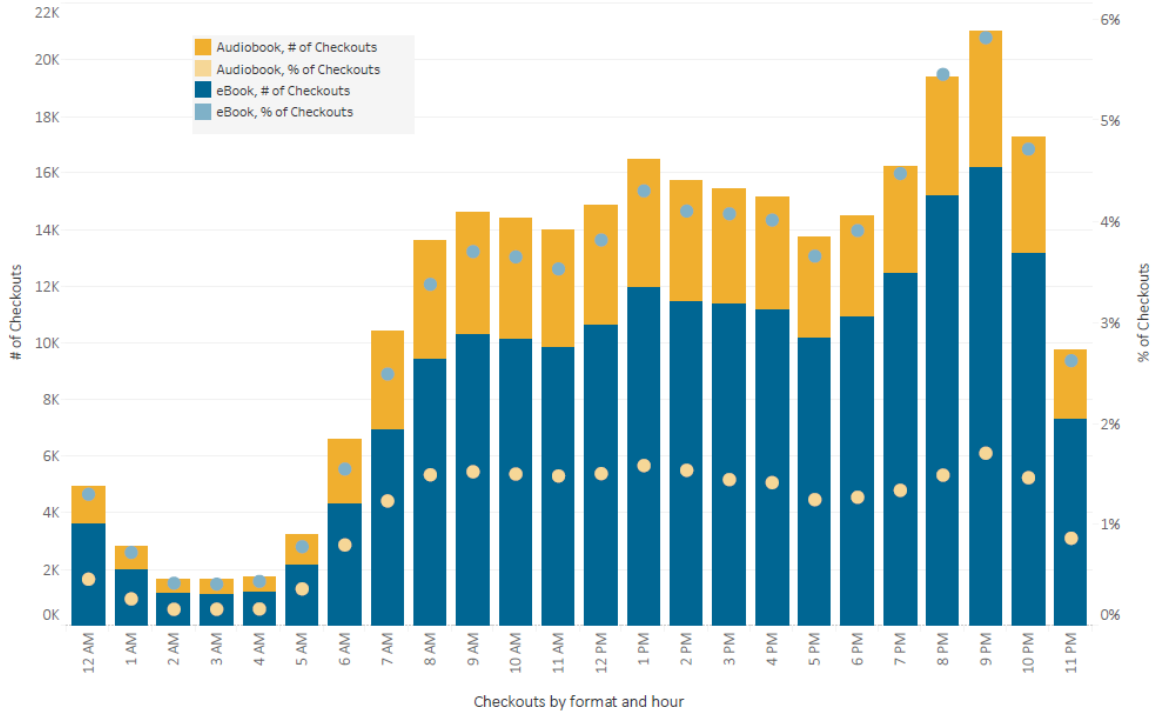
Circulation By Hour

Appendix B shows times circulation is occurring. Consistently, the last hour of operation Monday – Thursday is low circulation. Additionally, having programs during this time does not seem to correlate into additional circulations. Daytime circulations continue to improve, though these can still vary from week to week.

eResources usage

As was expected, eResource usage increases as the evening progresses and experiences a major rise between 7 and 10pm.

Rolling Prairie Digital Consortium (IL)
Checkouts by format and hour in the last 12 months



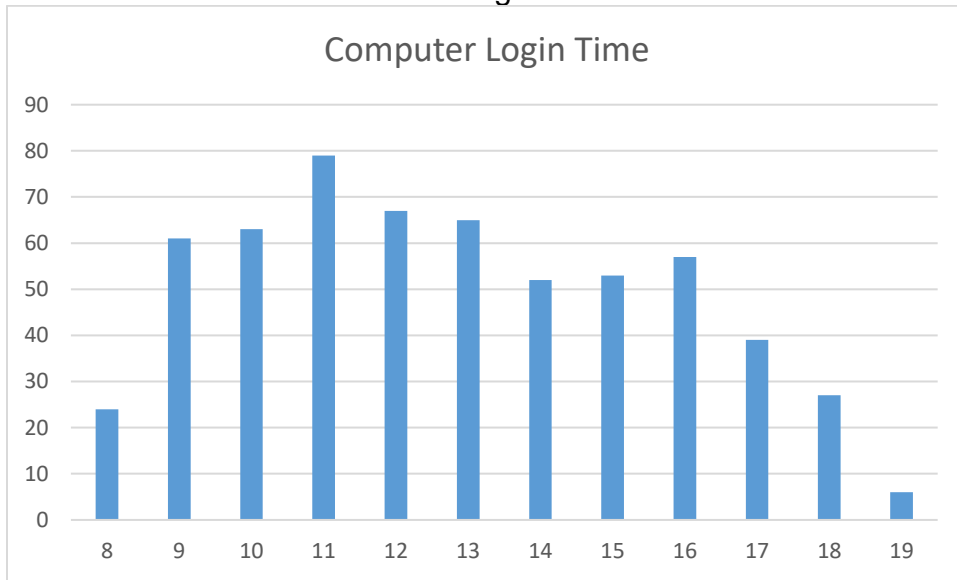
The orange and blue bars, ebooks and audiobooks respectively, represent the number of checkouts which occurred in the hour denoted. The orange and blue circles, ebooks and audiobooks respectively, represent the percent of total checkouts which occurred in the hour denoted.

Library Computer Usage for October 2021

This chart shows total computer usage for the month of October by days, which shows rather consistent usage across the days.

| Weekday | Total Uses | Total Time | Average Session |
|-----------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| Monday | 104 | 56:34:00 | 32.635 |
| Tuesday | 110 | 52:30:00 | 28.636 |
| Wednesday | 102 | 52:08:00 | 30.667 |
| Thursday | 102 | 50:38:00 | 29.784 |
| Friday | 121 | 52:41:00 | 26.124 |
| Saturday | 54 | 25:19:00 | 28.13 |
| TOTALS | 593 | 289:50:00 | 29.325 |

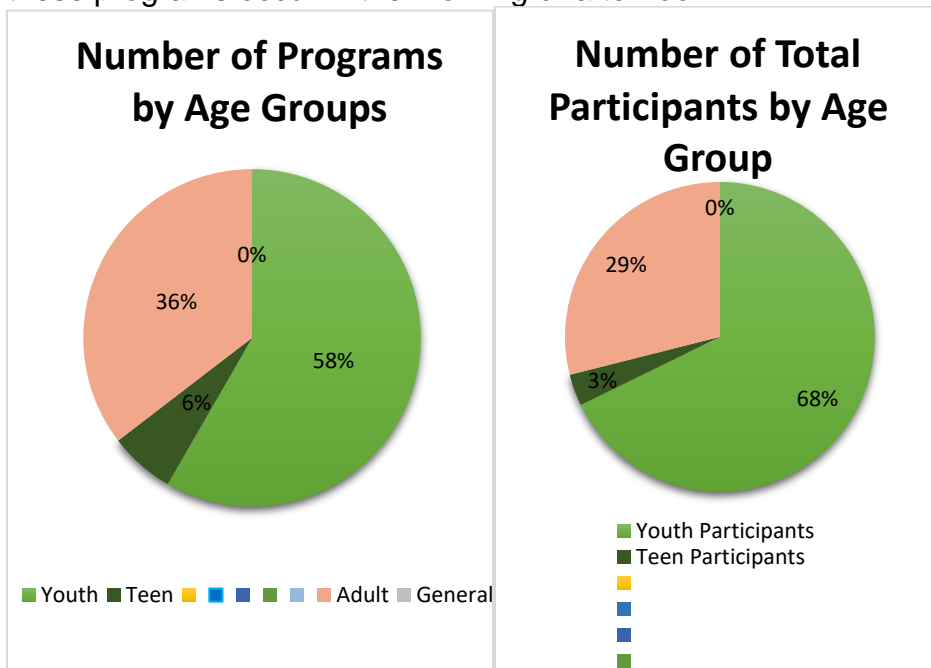
This chart shows the start of the login across the month of October.



What these charts show is that typical usage of our computers is pretty consistent across each of the days of the week and that use by hour is fairly consistent until we reach 5pm, at which time it starts to fall.

Program times/attendance

While we don't track programs by time, we do track attendance age range. Below are two charts representing the ages of our program attendees in October 2021. As you can see, youth makes up the overwhelming majority of attendees and programs. Typically, these programs occur in the morning or afternoon.



CONSIDERATIONS/DISCUSSION TOPICS

In an effort to be good stewards of our community's tax resources, we need to determine where to focus our efforts—where can we focus our resources (both monetary and staff) to have the largest impact?

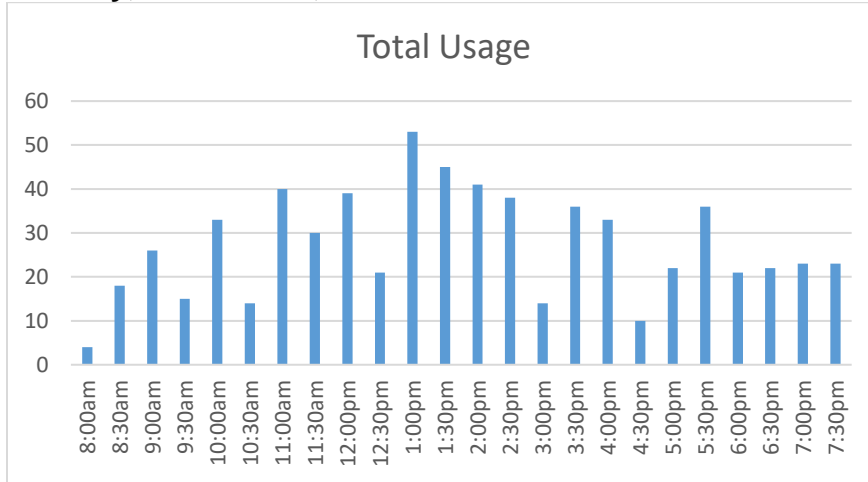
One clear area of focus would be during the lunch hours and maximizing patron interactions during that time. Another area for discussion is room rentals and the impact of this usage. Finally, the big picture question to think about is what metrics are important? Is it important to continue to grow certain metrics (like in-person circulation) or is it time to transition to other areas? These are large, philosophical questions that our forthcoming strategic planning will help us to tackle, but in the meantime, some changes can be implemented to allow us to be nimble and utilize our resources well.

Some possible ideas for implementation include:

1. Close at 7pm Monday – Thursday
2. Allow room bookings after hours again, but charge full rates, even to non-profits, during the times that the library is closed. We might also consider instituting a small fee for tax exempt organizations even during our regular hours of operation.
3. Every room booking will receive a scripted visit from a library staff member at the start of their meeting to promote library services.
4. Place additional focus on eResources, including staffing a virtual help desk after hours to assist patrons with checkouts.
5. Sell an eResources only card to non-residents.
6. Concentrate on in-person lunch hour and after school programming. Evening programming would largely be virtual, excluding large special events.

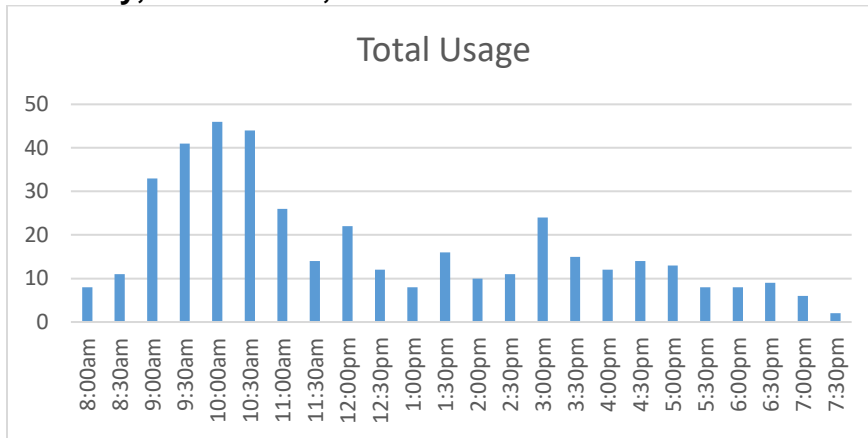
Appendix A Heat Map Data

Monday, October 11, 2021

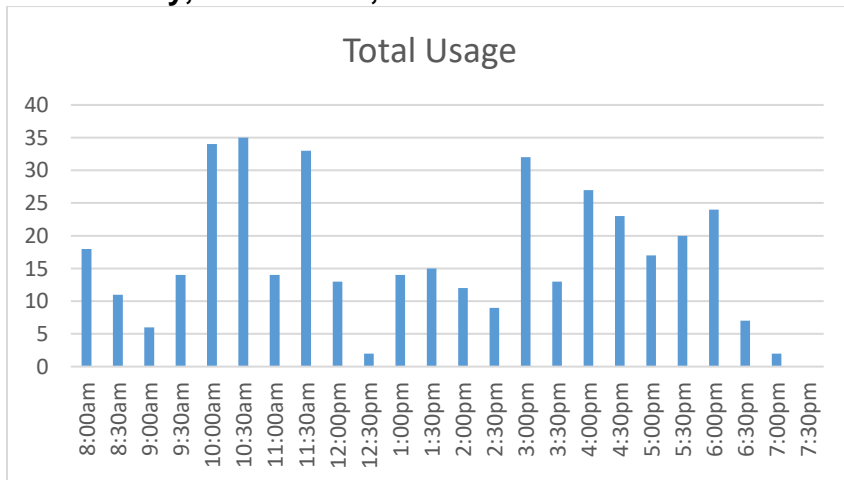


*5:30-8pm Workman—EWA 20 people

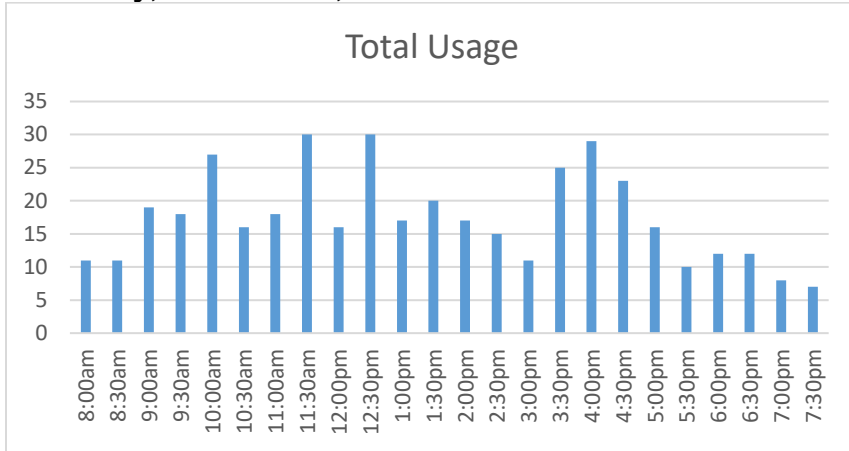
Tuesday, October 12, 2021



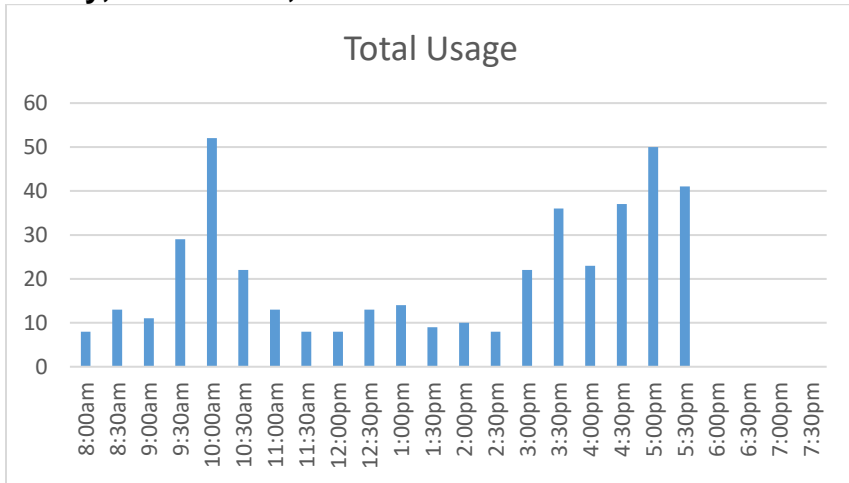
Wednesday, October 13, 2021



Thursday, October 14, 2021

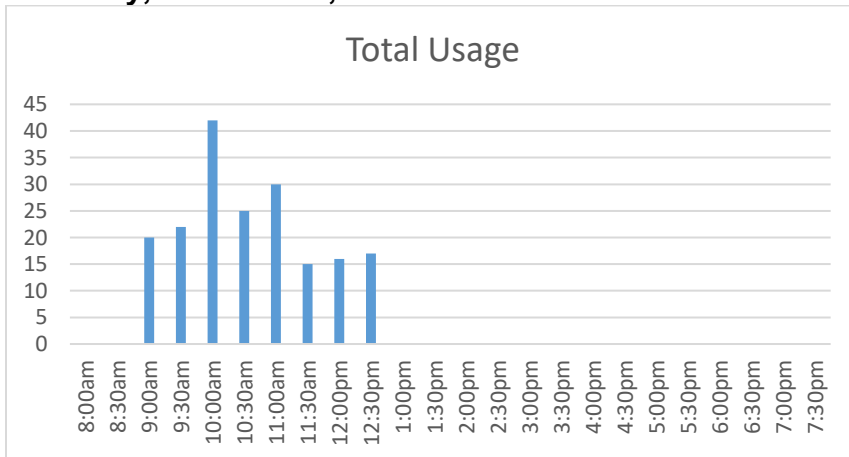


Friday, October 15, 2021

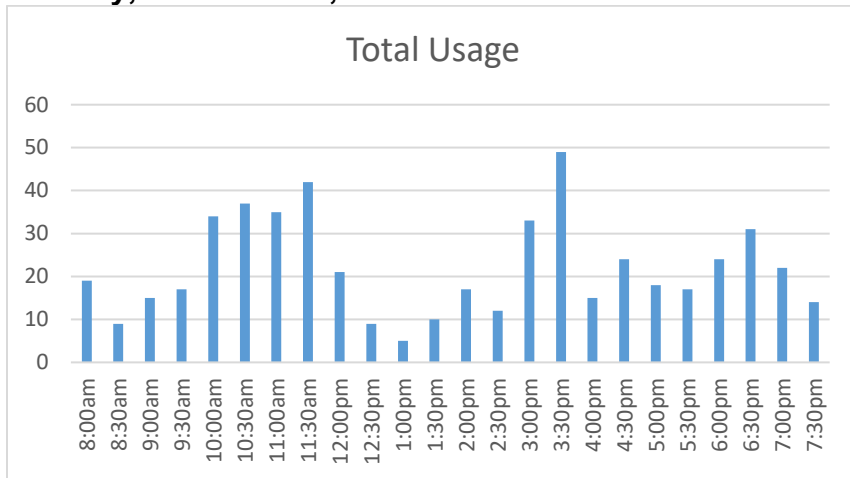


*5-6pm Workman and Luttrell Rooms SAFE 20 people

Saturday, October 16, 2021

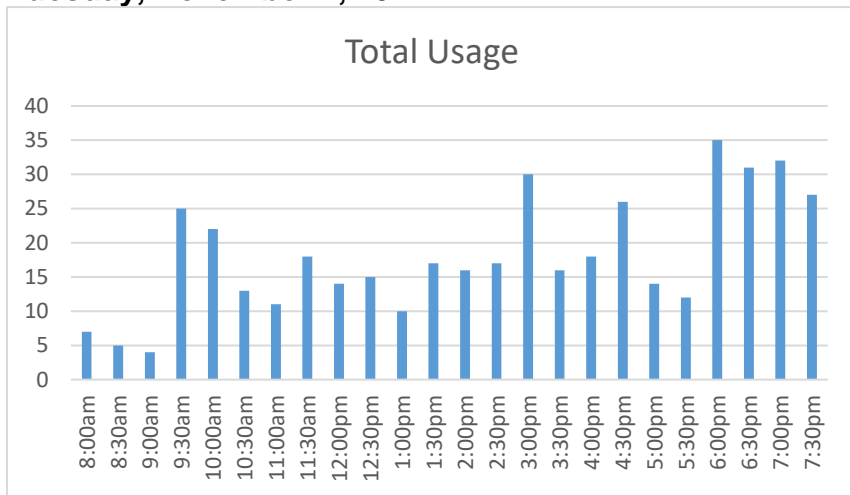


Monday, November 1, 2021



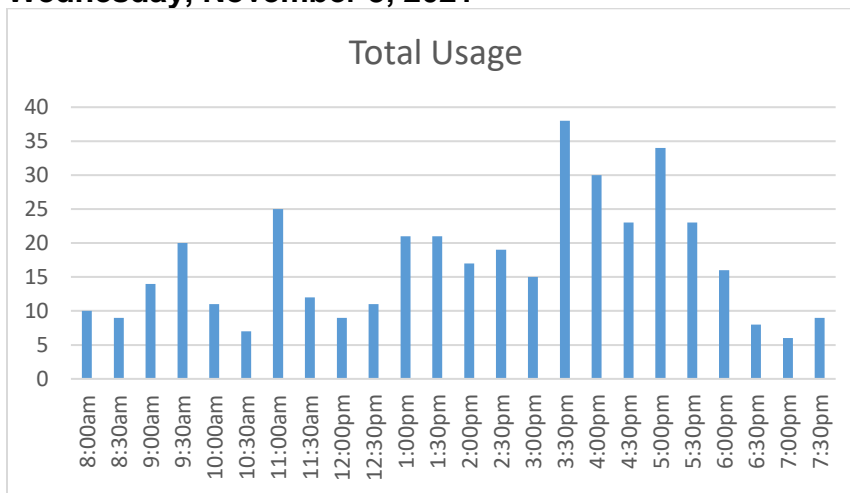
*6-8pm Workman Library Program 11 people

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

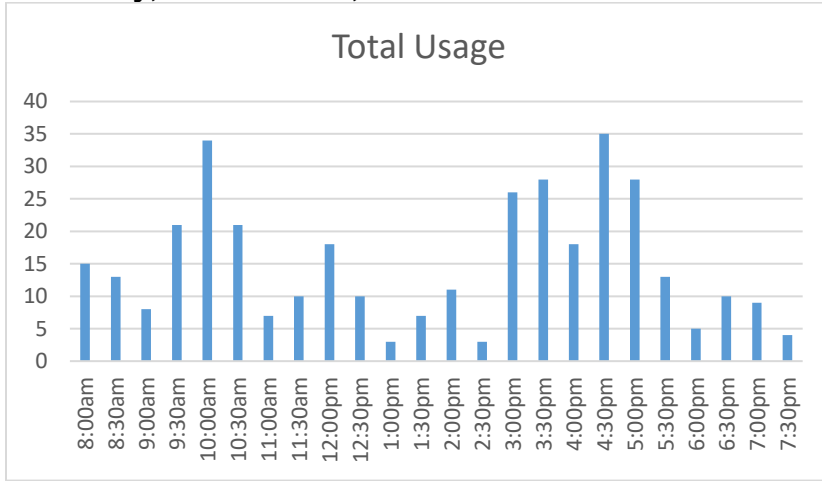


*5-7:30pm Bauer: Knitters 5 people * 6-7:30pm Luttrell: Girl Scouts 8 *6-8pm Workman: PEO 15 people

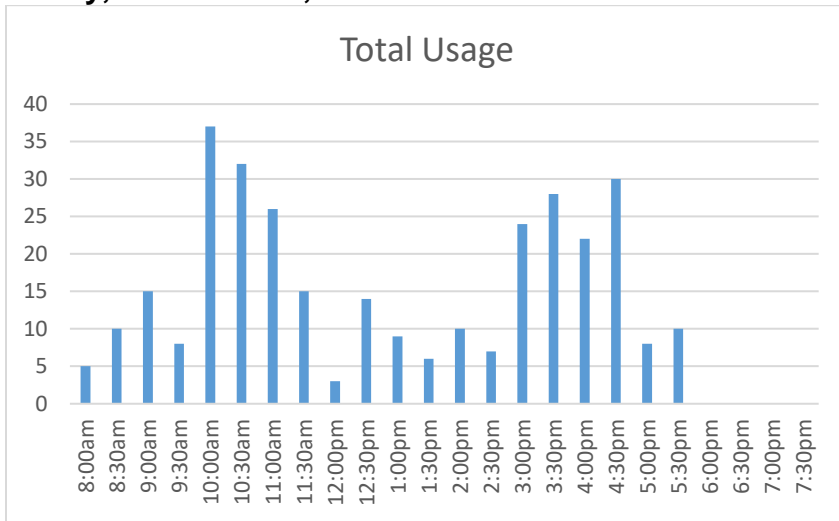
Wednesday, November 3, 2021



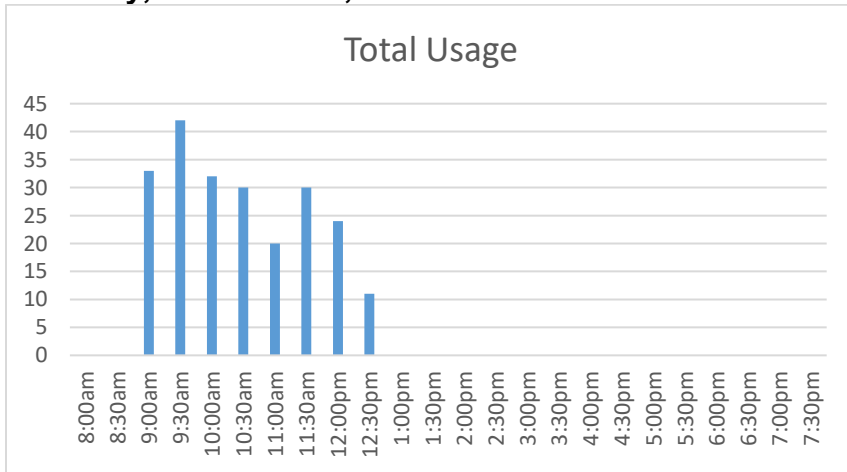
Thursday, November 4, 2021



Friday, November 5, 2021



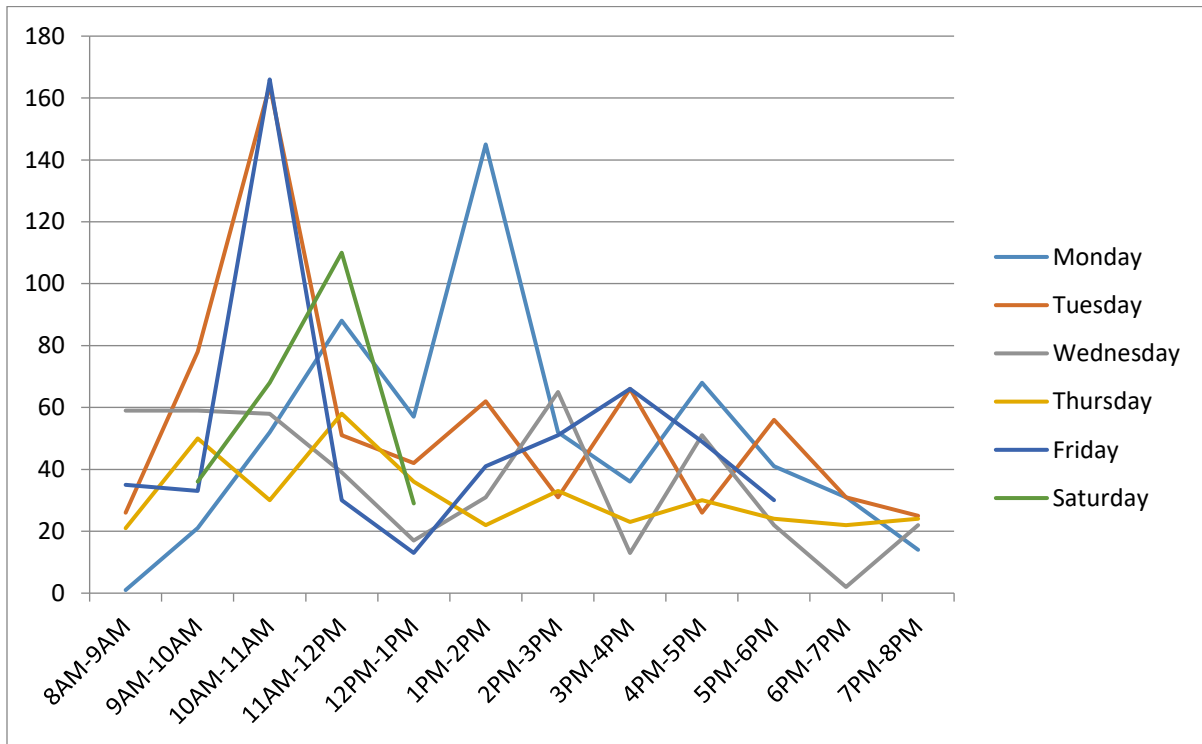
Saturday, November 6, 2021



Appendix B Circulation By Hour

Week of October 11 – October 16, 2021

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 8AM-9AM | 1 | 26 | 59 | 21 | 35 | |
| 9AM-10AM | 21 | 78 | 59 | 50 | 33 | 36 |
| 10AM-11AM | 52 | 164 | 58 | 30 | 166 | 68 |
| 11AM-12PM | 88 | 51 | 39 | 58 | 30 | 110 |
| 12PM-1PM | 57 | 42 | 17 | 36 | 13 | 29 |
| 1PM-2PM | 145 | 62 | 31 | 22 | 41 | |
| 2PM-3PM | 52 | 31 | 65 | 33 | 51 | |
| 3PM-4PM | 36 | 66 | 13 | 23 | 66 | |
| 4PM-5PM | 68 | 26 | 51 | 30 | 49 | |
| 5PM-6PM | 41 | 56 | 22 | 24 | 30 | |
| 6PM-7PM | 31 | 31 | 2 | 22 | | |
| 7PM-8PM | 14 | 25 | 22 | 24 | | |



Week of November 1 – November 6, 2021

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 8AM-9AM | 13 | 21 | 32 | 62 | 22 | |
| 9AM-10AM | 91 | 20 | 69 | 61 | 31 | 95 |
| 10AM-11AM | 168 | 44 | 44 | 70 | 139 | 90 |
| 11AM-12PM | 30 | 75 | 67 | 44 | 37 | 49 |
| 12PM-1PM | 66 | 59 | 7 | 109 | 64 | 45 |
| 1PM-2PM | 135 | 51 | 18 | 32 | 22 | |
| 2PM-3PM | 63 | 34 | 78 | 59 | 73 | |
| 3PM-4PM | 24 | 58 | 32 | 29 | 109 | |
| 4PM-5PM | 40 | 20 | 37 | 48 | 58 | |
| 5PM-6PM | 100 | 27 | 46 | 20 | 19 | |
| 6PM-7PM | 22 | 15 | 34 | 18 | | |
| 7PM-8PM | 4 | 25 | 6 | 1 | | |

