

2022 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

In 2022 6,433 people visited our Library. That does not include the 400 people who in two days came in to enjoy the part of the Historical Society's Sumy Exhibition on our library gallery walls. The Library no longer charges overdue fees.

As the library emerged from the Covid restrictions of the last 2 years, we were happy to find that 2022 saw the Library once again being able to present live programs after a 2year hiatus. We presented 56 programs for adults and children, with 652 in attendance.

Programs

Many of our programs included collaborations with various community organizations.

With the Historical Society we presented a lecture on Ben Franklin then, a presentation by local Author Bernie McCann on his recently released Visitors to My Street. For a series of Summer STEM Workshops for children we collaborated with the Chester-Horicon Youth Commission, participated in the NW School Kindergarten Round up, the YMCA summer literacy program, as well as a few storytelling sessions for Head Start. We were happy to provide a venue for the Rotary Club and Tri-county literacy to aid them in their search for literacy tutors.

In addition, the Library sponsored 2 programs for teens, How to Survive Your First Year in College as well as 10 Paintings Everyone Should Know. Beginning in April we reinstated our weekly preschool story time, and during the Summer we presented 5 family programs as well as a Summer Reading Challenge for children in collaboration with the Horicon Free Library.

The Ruplin gallery and display case exhibits were held monthly with Meet the Artist receptions for most of the exhibitors.

Technology

As far as technology went, people throughout our community experienced some power outages that took time to restore, and difficulty in travel which resulted in 6 instructors using our library to hold virtual classes for university students, some of which were out of state. 4 people, whose personal computers and/or internet services were not up to the task, used our technology to renew their professional licenses in real estate and surveying to name a few. We had 3 people using our technology for professional job interviews. We conducted many digital literacy sessions showing patrons how to use email, submit job applications and unemployment filings online, as well as setting up the VFW with multi-factor authentication, so they could meet the new requirement by the IRS, for filing their year-end reports digitally.

In 2022, 300 people used our wired library computers and even more, 3,800 used our wireless services.

Other Library services which include fax, scan, copy and print were in constant use.

Free Services Provided with a Library Card

The library currently has registered 1,500 people with cards. One of the services these cards give our patrons are the use of the Patron Access Catalog (PAC). This is an online catalogue that allows patrons to review their accounts, renew items, browse and order from the collections of all the libraries within the Southern Adirondack (SALS) and Mohawk Valley Library Systems (MVLS). Requested items can be delivered to the patron's library of choice for pick up. Last year the catalogue saw 3,377 log-ins from Chester Library alone and of this number 2,000 placed requests.

Part of the monthly Automation fees we pay to the SALS covers an Inter-library loan delivery system which brings to our patrons items that have been ordered online as well as our books that have been returned to other libraries. In 2022, 2,970 of our collection items were loaned through inter-library loan to other libraries. Our patrons, through inter-library loan borrowed 3,246 items from other libraries. We receive ILL deliveries three times a week.

Hoopla is another service which is free to cardholders in the Town of Chester. Hoopla is a streaming service which provides downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, movies, music, comics, graphic novels, magazines and master classes on various topics. Last year, our first year with Hoopla, showed 400 check outs.

Another free service for card holders is Overdrive/Libby. This service provides free downloadable audio and e-books. 2022 saw 2,800 check outs, appx 60 items per week in Chester alone. All content for this program is jointly held by all libraries in SALS and MVLS. Each library contributes to the purchase of these items based on a percentage of their circulation numbers.

Library Collection

As regards our library collection it is currently composed of over 25,700 physical items which include fiction, non-fiction and large type books, local history and lake management books, graphic novels, audiobooks, music, DVDs, a book arts collection, sport equip, puzzles, board games, museum passes magazines and newspapers. Additionally, there are over 15,000 e-content books and audiobooks that are jointly owned by the 5 counties of libraries that make up the SALS. All are offered for free to Library patrons with cards. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of our collection are adults items and $\frac{1}{4}$ for children.

This year we added 592, purchased and donated, items to our collection. Adult items added include 313 books 86 dvds, 35 audiobooks, and 18 periodicals. Children's items included 108 books 30 dvds and 2 audio books.

Circulation

2022 saw our circulation numbers rise 12%. 13,825 items circulated, an average of 290 items per week.

43% of our check-outs were adult books

22% children's books

17% dvds

10% e-items

5% audiobooks

2% Music

1% misc.

Facility

In 2022 we received a grant from the Pearsall Foundation which constructed and furnished an Adirondack-style lean to for our Children's room. We also received a \$5,000 construction grant from SALS to cover the partial cost of replacing the deteriorating windows in the Library. The remainder of the cost of the project to be covered by the Town of Chester. Project is due for completion by March of 2023 at the latest.

On Friday, December 23, 2022 our area received rain after a significant collection of snow causing the drainage pipes from the roof of this building to partially freeze and not allow the slushy water to drain properly. With no place to go, this collection of water drained through its only outlet revealing holes in the roof along the back edge of the library. A significant amount (gallons) of water poured into the library, soaking insulation and collapsing some ceiling tiles. The leak continued into the children's area which thankfully collected in the light fixture giving us enough time to remove the computers directly under. The water then proceeded to soak and collapse the ceiling tiles in front of the elevator damaging the walls on the first floor below. We were lucky enough to have been in the library when the down pouring leak began and were able to protect the rug, and remove all the books as the leak proceeded into the shelving area. Luckily nothing was destroyed because we were there when it started. Later it froze and the leak stopped. The Library would like to request that if possible at least the holes in the roof where this occurred be patched so that this experience will not be repeated. If no one had been in the library, significant damage could have been done to the structure, furnishings, equipment, and collection. I would like to thank Jewell, part of the Town's building maintenance staff, for her quick and efficient response to what could have become a really bad situation.

In 2023, there are, in the works, plans to update and significantly increase our wireless reach. We hope to further increase our participation and collaborations with other community organizations in order to best present educational and entertaining programs of interest to our community, widen our avenues of communication on the services our library provides and to continue the upward trend of circulation we enjoyed in 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Alma Alvarez, Director
Town of Chester Public Library

Approved: February 22, 2023