



## Library Director’s Report

May 17, 2022

Submitted by Jill Dugas Hughes

### TOP INITIATIVES

- Annual Report NYS DLD
- COVID Staff Outages
- Clean up 2021 Financial Records
- Spring Reading Challenge Program
- Reopening Meeting Room Preparation
- Reopening Playroom Preparation
- Training New Hire(s)- Library Assistant(s) in YS Department
- Cloud File Sharing
- 1:1 Technology help

### VISITORS

- Visits increased 7% over March, (9,890) patrons visited the library (9,087) visits inside the library and (803) drive-thru visits. Our busiest day has consistently been Tuesday. Inside visits continue to grow, 5,725 visitors to the children’s room!

### FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND STEWARDSHIP

- **Grants Received:**
  - We received a \$600 grant from Stewart’s Holiday Match to purchase prize books for our upcoming summer reading program.
  - Molly collaborated on a grant for \$2,500 to fund a series of summer science programs for children. The grant was received, and programs and details are being worked out.
  - The Friends of the Library awarded us \$14,199 in grants at their April board meeting:
    - Museum Passes (\$2,794)
    - Periodicals (\$3,000)
    - Adult Basic Education and Jobs Collections (\$750)
    - Summer Reading Challenge Adult Programming (\$655)
    - Playroom Furniture (\$2,000)
    - Summer Reading Youth Programming (\$5,000)
- **Business Office:**
  - We have continued to prioritize updating the financial records and have made significant progress. To date, the 2021 and 2022-to date bank statements have been reconciled, all bills and deposits have been entered into Quick Books, our depreciation records have been updated, and we are confident in our financial statements once again. Deferred Compensation adjustments have been completed and NYSLRS adjustments are in progress. We included a list of 2021 checks which were paid, but not approved by the library board, which have been included in your board packets for

approval this month. Additionally, the NYS Annual Report to Library Development has been completed.

- We still have several outstanding items that are in progress/outstanding from last year:
  - NYSLRS (one employee account has been reconciled, there are still several adjustments remaining)
  - NYS OSC AUD report
  - 2021 Audit (we have begun preparations and should be ready to submit reports this month to the auditors)

## OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND CULTURE OF LEARNING/GROWTH

### Staff- New Hires/Training

- Substitute Librarian, Adult Services, Laura Barber continued training with Elizabeth and has begun solo shifts at the reference desk.
- We welcomed two new Library Assistant's to the Youth Service Department. Elizabeth Keville is our full-time assistant, and Jessica Adams was promoted from the circulation department to be our part-time assistant.

### Equity Training

- Cami and I both attended a series of Racial Equity Training sessions at UHLS which were terrific hosted by the McLean Group and paid for by UHLS.
- Jen completed a year-long Equity and Access for Diverse Youth curriculum called Project READY which was provided by the Upper Hudson Library System. The primary focus of the Project READY curriculum is on improving relationships with, services to, and resources for youth of color and Native youth.

### Cloud File Sharing

- Hosting department files on SharePoint caused a number of unforeseen issues. We are exploring possible solutions with Accu-Networks.

### UHLS Adult Program of the Year- 2021- Pen to Pandemic

We are proud to learn that the East Greenbush Community Library has been named the winner of the UHLS Adult Program of the Year for 2021.

Highlights from Elizabeth's nomination cover letter:

"After the onset of the pandemic, Adult Services Librarian Jody Squadere noticed the great creativity of local writers and artists as they worked to make sense of the virus and the new world it had created. Inspired by this response and by her own mother's entry into a library writing contest, Jody conceived of a story contest for our library community, designed to inspire creativity, document a moment in time, and honor the experiences of local writers.

Because our East Greenbush library community in fact includes many patrons from surrounding towns, we opened the contest to all adult Rensselaer County residents. Partnering with the Town of East

Greenbush and the Hart Cluett Museum in Troy broadened our reach and provided us with expert judges.

In January 2021, Jody and Community Relations Coordinator Susan Bell unveiled the Pen to Pandemic project with press releases and an appeal in our newsletter:

Do you have a story to tell? In support of our home-grown talent, we invite submissions of original short stories: works of fiction in any genre set in Rensselaer County during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The contest was promoted through multiple channels, from signage and social media to articles in the Times Union and Troy Record. Our publicity was effective, and by the contest deadline of March 15, we had received 40 qualifying story submissions.

East Greenbush Town Historian Bobbie Reno, Rensselaer County/Troy City Historian Kathy Sheehan, and SUNY Albany Professor Frankie Bailey judged the entries and selected winners and runners-up in two age categories: under and over 50. The winning stories were beautifully rendered, thoughtful, and original while adhering to the criteria of time and place.

At an outdoor reception and public reading on June 5, winners presented their work to a crowd of 35 friends, family members, local dignitaries, and other attendees. Winner's stories were published in the Summer 2021 edition of New Authors Journal, and all contributions were compiled in an original book, Pen to Pandemic: A Community Anthology from the Time of COVID-19, printed by The Troy Bookmakers, gifted to participants, and available at the library.

As Jody writes in the foreword to the published compilation:

The writers tell universal stories with common themes for anyone living through the pandemic. Extended families living together, visits to loved ones through windows, new versions of traditional holiday gatherings, children still making friends and people still falling in love, sometimes with their own partners all over again. Toilet paper! Streaming Netflix! Food, food, food! Finding it, preparing it, and most importantly, smelling and tasting it! These stories touched me to laugh, cry, or both.

Indeed, Pen to Pandemic touched many of us as it celebrated the triumph of community in a time of fear and isolation."

Congratulations Jody, Elizabeth and team!

## CENTER FOR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

### **Summer Reading Planning**

The Adult and Youth Services department have been planning Summer Reading programs. We have secured a tent for outdoor programming in July and August.

### **Shifting community partnership responsibilities**

- Moving to a single point of contact at the library for key partners and shifting some workload away from Adult Services to Susan Bell, Community Relations Coordinator.

**Friends of the Library**

- The Friends book sale began April 8 and runs through April 12! Come shop!

**Wi-Fi access Point in Reading Garden**

Equipment has been ordered and we are waiting for a backordered part before installation can begin.

**Teen Space**

167 teens used the Teen Meeting Room A/B space in the 12 days it was staffed in April.

**Playroom**

The playroom officially opened on May 11. Special thanks to Paul for painting, Jen, Elizabeth, and Molly for cleaning/reorganizing and to the many families we know are thrilled to be using the playroom again!

**Community Partnerships**

- I attended the Annual Healthy Kids Day at the YMCA, along with my teenage daughter, Nia. Together, we handed out a simple craft for kids, Farmers Market Bags, registered people for library cards, and promoted library services.
- In April, 44 adult day-hab groups visited the library with 202 people. This has been steadily increasing since January (13 groups/73 people)
- Our youth services April book display was provided by local Girl Scouts in Service Region 136. The scouts made their own Women's History Books featuring famous Girl Scouts!

**LIFELONG CURIOSITY, IMAGINATION AND LEARNING****1-1 Tech Help**

Wireless Wednesdays will begin on May 25. It will be held every other week, hosted by Karrie and Selena. To address COVID safety concerns, we have ordered a portable plexiglass shield with a cutout for passing a device back and forth that can be used at any table.

**Instructional Videos Highlighting Digital Services**

Based on feedback from the Winter Reading Program, Karrie and Selena have been creating instructional videos for our YouTube channel and writing corresponding Tech Tips posts. A coordinated marketing campaign has been put in place with Susan's help. Completed to date: Times Union, Consumer Reports, Beanstack, NoveList. They are currently working on Ancestry.

**Spring Reading Challenge**

Currently we have 32 adults participating, 27 kids, and 5 teens!

**Non-Fiction Collection- Adult Services**

Jody is continuing her significant and much needed weed of our nonfiction collections. Eventually, our hope is to create some additional nooks/seating areas by removing some shelving.

**Outdoor and Indoor Storytimes Returned**

April saw the return of outdoor story times, as well as our first indoor story time in over 2 years!

April Break Week Programming for Kids

April break week programming for kids was popular, featuring Bingo, two Breakout sessions, and two programs presented by Mad Science of the Capital District.

**April Library Sponsored Programs:**

**Teens (ages 12-18): 6 programs; 135 attendees**

- Friday Mashup: 2 programs; 32 participants
- Anime Club: 2 programs; 23 participants
- Break Out! 1 program; 6 participants
- Spring Into Reading: 1 program; 5 participants

**Children (ages 0-5): 7 programs; 493 attendees**

- Pet Scavenger Hunt: 207 participants
- Take & Make Butterfly: 81 participants
- Take & Make Bunney Garden: 81 participants
- Outdoor Storytime: 40 participants
- Indoor Storytime: 48 participants
- Book Bundles: 11 participants
- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten: 25 participants

**Children (ages 6-11): 9 programs; 414 attendees**

- Take & Make- Yarn Bug: 107 participants
- Take & Make- Flower Scene: 78 participants
- DEC Seedling Giveaway: 13 participants
- Bear & Book Bingo: 48 participants
- Mad Science/Glow Show(s): 2 programs; 52 participants
- Break Out! 7 participants
- Healthy Kids Day: 82 participants (outreach at YMCA)
- Spring Into Reading Challenge: 27 participants

**Adults: 14 programs; 108 attendees**

- ENL: English as a New Language 6 programs; 25 participants
- Beginner's Yoga: 8 participants
- Wednesday Night Book Chat (Facebook): 4 programs; 60 participants
- Monday Morning Book Discussion: 10 participants
- Monday Evening Book Discussion: 5 participants
- Spring Into Reading Challenge: 32 participants

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Dugas Hughes, Director