



You Belong Here

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Director's Report- November 21, 2023

Based on Strategic Plan 2023-2028 "You Belong Here"

Adopted September 19, 2023

Vision: To serve at the central hub where people feel welcome, supported in learning, and connected to community and one another.

Mission: We inspire learning, imagination, collaboration, and compassion by providing our community with equitable access to resources in a welcoming environment.

Capital Projects Update:

- Addressing HVAC and Window Issues.
- Further exploratory work on the windows, after a minor fix, revealed continued leakage. We are waiting for a proposal from the architects. We are hoping for an update in advance of the board meeting.
- The HVAC controller system is no longer supported, which means that without security updates, we are at risk. We have been working with the architect, engineer, and HVAC company to come up with the specifications and have received a quote for replacement. This was discussed at the Administrative Committee meeting and the recommendation is to proceed with the replacement of the unit (upgrade FX-60 controller to FX-80 controller) as well as add current sensor (CT) switches on the compressor and condenser fan to monitor the operation of the stand-alone unit in the server room. This will provide the reassurance we need to keep the server room door shut, which is required for Cyber Insurance. The proposed motion for the board to consider is a not to exceed cost of \$25,000 for the controls system replacement.

IT Transition

- Completed transition to Tag Solutions. Cyber insurance application in progress.
- IT consulting services have been fully transitioned to Tag Solutions. Our subscription with Connectwise, billed through Accu-networks, runs out this month. Fantastic job Selina! This has been a large project, and we are very appreciative of your significant work.
- The cyber insurance application will be submitted shortly.

Open Positions

- We continue to actively recruit for open roles. Despite multiple interviews, filling the Library Assistant, Media/Technology position remains challenging. To address this, we have redefined the role as 'Librarian I,' offering adaptability in duties and compensation for candidates without a master's in library science (MLS). We are nearing the conclusion of interviews for the Librarian I role in Youth & Family Services and aim to fill the position by year-end. Additionally, the newly approved outreach librarian role is being finalized and will be advertised soon."



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Staffing Changes

- Welcomed new members and farewelled long-serving staff.
- On November 15, Jenna Schmonsky joined our team as the new Administrative Assistant. With her recent experience in the same role at Guilderland Public Library, Jenna brings a vast array of skills and knowledge, including experience as a Notary! She steps into the shoes of Amy Hodor, and we are excited to have her on board. Welcome, Jenna!
- In October, we bid farewell to Jennifer Lubbers, a dedicated Children's Librarian for 15 years. Starting as an intern during her library school days, Jen's commitment has been pivotal in shaping our children's services. She spearheaded several key projects like the genrefication of picture books, the introduction of STEM kits, and the '1000 Books Before Kindergarten' program. Her unique blend of engaging storytelling and a warm, humorous approach will be missed.
- As Jen turns the page to focus on her health and family, we extend our deepest gratitude for her invaluable contributions and unwavering dedication. Her impact on our community will be long remembered, and we wholeheartedly support her in this new chapter of her life.

Staff Manual

- Work on the staff manual continued this month and the Services Committee will review the final draft at their next meeting.

NYLA

We sent several staff members to the New York Library Association Conference (November 1-4) in Saratoga. Next month, I will have an update for the Board.

Goal 1. Build Community Connections

Community members will feel welcomed by the library and library staff and will feel more connected with one another by having access to programs and resources that are responsive to their needs, reflective of the diversity of community voices, and give them the opportunity to work together with the library to create meaningful experiences.

1. Increase opportunities and methods for community members to offer feedback

Status:

- A public hearing will be held on November 21 at 6:30 pm for the community to provide input on the Remote Attendance Policy and the proposed Volunteer Fire Fighter/Volunteer Ambulance Worker Tax Exemption.

2. Increase program opportunities for community members to engage meaningfully with one another across lines of difference

Status: No progress this month.



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3. Identify current underserved communities and craft initiatives by increased usage by identified groups

Status:

- Successfully enrolled a new member in our "Books with Wheels" service, delivering books to homebound patrons. Special thanks to the Friends group, especially Susan Nowogrodzki, for their dedicated monthly book delivery efforts.
- The children's room featured creative displays, including Halloween-themed chapter books and a fun "Who are those Boooooook Characters?" theme.
- Our monthly Homeschool Meetup was well-attended, drawing 20 participants.
- Appreciation goes to volunteers Ginny Lazzaro and Lynne Cateletti for their invaluable contributions to the book club.
- In partnership with Questar III BOCES, we successfully conducted seven English Language Classes in October, welcoming 22 learners. These classes play a crucial role in language development and enhancing community inclusivity.
- Collaborated with the Legal Project to implement the Elder Law Assistance Program, benefiting 4 participants.

Goal 2. Engage With Your Community

New and longtime community members will see the East Greenbush Community Library as a central hub for resources to engage them with local government, volunteer opportunities, and programs, services, and activities in partnership with community agencies and organizations.

1. Increase bi-directional communication with local government and community agencies

Status:

- Amy McCarthy and I had a productive meeting with Jeff Simons, Superintendent of EGCS, to discuss our strategic plan and explore collaboration opportunities. This includes potential updates to our Teen Space, involving EGCS students.
- Amy McCarthy represented us at the Kiwanis Club meeting on October 24, highlighting our community involvement.
- Jody Squadere and I attended the Rensselaer County Cooperative Extension Open House and Annual Meeting on November 1. A special congratulation to Jody for receiving the prestigious "Golden Shovel Award," a testament to her outstanding contributions.

2. Increase usage of or collaboration with the library by local government and community groups for meetings and events

Status:

- Jenna and Jody organized our participation in the Great Give Back, a month-long initiative collecting period products for a local shelter and area refugees. Their efforts significantly contributed to this worthy cause.



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- We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Greenbush Garden Club, Questar BOCES, AARP, Legal Project, and the Greenbush Historical Society for their valuable partnerships with the library this month.
- The Greenbush Garden Club successfully conducted a Soil Revitalization program, which was well-received with 17 participants.
- The AARP Smart Driver Course was a hit, attracting 23 attendees who gained valuable driving insights.
- 43 community groups borrowed meeting space, with just shy of 5,000 attendees. Community groups included State Capital Stitchers, Book Club, Capital District Linux Users Group, Capitolers, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Cub Scouts, East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association, Mahjong Learning Group, Prospect Homeowners Association, Rensselaer County Pickleball, Wolf Scout, Vintage Computer User Group, and more. Also included in the figures were 10 same-day reservations.

3. Increase usage of library resources to connect community members to community events

Status:

- Our special presentation "Trolleys, Trails and Tales" focused on the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail, aligning perfectly with our first new exhibit. This event attracted 63 attendees, highlighting our library's commitment to integrating local history and culture into our programming.

Goal 3. Satisfy Curiosity and Stimulate Imagination

Community members will know that when they interact with East Greenbush Community Library, they will have access to resources and experiences that enrich their lives and engage them with new ideas in spaces that allow for both quiet and active uses.

1. Assess the use of physical (indoor/outdoor) and virtual spaces to meet the needs of the community, including barriers to accessibility

Status:

- We have ordered modern furniture for both the main library and children's room, aiming to create a more adaptable and welcoming environment. This includes replacing worn, stained, and outdated items. The upgrades cover new chairs and tables for the children's area and tutoring/collaborative spaces, updated staff chairs for workstations, modern seating for the computer zone, and comfortable chairs for the quiet area. Furniture still in good condition will be retained or offered to other libraries. The outgoing furniture dates back to the library's opening in 2001. Additionally, we are enhancing our space with new display materials and signage. Future phased updates, yet to be ordered, will focus on improving collection shelving, quiet workspaces, and the computer area.



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2. Increase the overall awareness that community members have of the library's programs, collections, and services

Status:

- Jessica engaged with nearly 200 individuals at the YMCA Teal Halloween event, designed for children with food allergies. She provided non-food, Halloween-themed treats, representing our library's commitment to inclusive community activities.
- Our "Friday Thing" teen programs were a success, attracting 27 participants across three sessions.
- The Youth Services team crafted three personalized Book Bundles for kids, distributing a total of 36 books tailored to their interests.
- We hosted a matinee screening of "Haunted Mansion" on October 19, drawing 17 viewers. Additionally, the Cinema Society presented the 1958 classic "Vertigo" on October 5, which was attended by 9 cinema enthusiasts.
- An Oktoberfest celebration featured a performance by the Squeeze Play Accordion Band, enjoyed by 28 attendees, adding a musical flair to our library events.

3. Increase circulation of diverse resources and materials

Status:

- The Youth & Family Services team skillfully put together a display for National Hispanic Heritage Month, highlighting culturally rich materials.
- The Adult and Information Services team created several captivating displays, featuring diverse themes like Inktober, Israel & Palestine, International Spice Week, Indigenous People's Day, and Banned Books.
- Our Anime Club for Teens hosted two events, attracting a total of 19 enthusiastic participants.
- Heather is in the process of designing an engaging Adult Reading Challenge for 2024, promising a year full of literary exploration.
- We are excited to announce the library-wide Winter Reading Challenge, themed "Stay Cozy." More details will be shared soon, offering a warm invitation to our community of readers.

Goal 4. Promote Literacies

Community members will see the value in literacies of all types, from early literacy to digital literacy.

Community members of all ages will find services at the library that help them to develop or practice a variety of literacy skills, develop their ability to understand and express ideas and opinions, and to succeed in pursuits of interest.

1. Increase opportunities for hands-on and intergenerational learning

Status:

- This year's Frankentoy Workshop was a hit, drawing 13 teens who creatively repurposed recycled toys into unique products.
- The children's room scavenger hunt remains a major attraction, engaging a remarkable 473 participants this month.



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- The Youth Services (YS) team also offered other engaging activities during library visits: a Monthly Voting Sheet (77 participants) and a Color a Ghost display (97 participants).
- In the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, 67 kids read an impressive total of 4,384 books. This month saw 9 new participants and 1 proud graduate!
- The 500 Books Before Middle School program continues to thrive. 31 tweens read 785 books, with 4 new tweens joining and three teens completing the program this month.
- Participation in the 100 Books Before Graduation program saw a slight dip after the summer, with three active teens this month, including one new member, collectively reading 6 books.
- The "Viva La Vida! Frida Kahlo" workshop for adults and teens on October 10 attracted 10 participants.
- The Zen of Watercolors Workshop was a success among adults, with 15 attendees.
- An author talk titled "Fueling Creativity: Wizards, Writing, and Finding Our Gold" was held for adults and teens, drawing 9 participants.

2. Increase on-site and on-line access to resources that promote literacy skills

Status:

- In October, we hosted six Family Storytimes, which were well-received with 203 attendees, and four Preschool Storytimes, attracting 61 attendees.
- We celebrated Halloween with three Halloween Parades/Storytimes, drawing a total of 255 participants. A special thank you to the Kiwanis Club for supporting the Halloween Party for families after each parade. Also, a big congratulations to Elizabeth on her highly successful first storytime, captivating 72 attendees. Her presence is already a hit with the children and their families!
- We organized two in-person book discussions with a total of 16 participants, and four virtual book discussions that were popular, engaging 124 participants.

3. Increase community partnerships with educational institutions

Status: Not worked on this month

Goal 5. Advance Local Economic Vitality

Local Businesses, entrepreneurs, and community leaders will view the library as part of their support system for growth and success in our community.

1. Increase library staff capacity to assist businesses and entrepreneurs in physical and digital spaces

Status: Not started

2. Increase usage of existing library resources that support local businesses and entrepreneurs

Status: Not started

3. Increase opportunities for local businesses and entrepreneurs to network and build skills

Status:



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- Karen and I represented the library at the Great Greenbush Quest finale, an event that garnered significant community involvement and was jointly supported by the Friends, Kiwanis, and the East Greenbush Police Department. The event witnessed participation from 91 teams, totaling 285 people of all ages, with a substantial turnout from East Greenbush (62%) and Schodack (15%). A majority of the participants, 79%, found the event as expected, while a notable 5% were pleasantly surprised, finding it even better than anticipated. Predominantly family teams participated, with most completing the quest in less than five days. The event's success was further highlighted by all respondents expressing their wish to see it become an annual tradition. They particularly enjoyed exploring new local places and businesses, the excitement of the adventure, and spending quality time with family and friends. Special thanks are due to Julie Ann Price, President of the Friends, for her outstanding leadership in orchestrating this event, especially right after managing the recent book sale. The police department's engaging drone demonstrations added a unique touch, making the finale a memorable experience for everyone involved.
- This month, we welcomed Catherine Corbitt, a work-study teen from Columbia High School to the Youth & Family Services Department as a page, assisted by Pam. This marks Catherine's first work experience, arranged by Mary Ann from Circulation. Her addition is a wonderful example of our commitment to providing meaningful work experiences for young members of our community.

Respectfully Submitted: Jill Dugas Hughes, Director