



Library Director’s Report

September 20, 2022

Submitted by Jill Dugas Hughes

TOP INITIATIVES

- Summer Reading Program: Oceans of Possibility! 6/27-8/12
- Alarm System Upgrade
- Reopening Meeting Room Preparation
- Personnel Changes
- Farmers Market- Wednesday’s 6/8-9/28
- Meeting Room AV Installation
- Insurance- General Liability & Cyber
- Annual Budget and Trustee Election
- Library Card Sign-Up Month- September
- IT Security Audit/Security Procedures and Training for Staff
- Alarm System Upgrade Installation
- Patio Wi-Fi Installation

VISITORS

- AUGUST: 2022 August visits (10,902) increased 28% over August 2021(8,534) and decreased 2% over July 2022 (11,141)

BORROWING

- Physical Items: 28,865 items were borrowed in August 2022 (2% more than July 2022 and 20% more than August 2021!
 - Circulation Desk: (26,493) items were circulated in August 2022; an increase of 27% over August 2021 (20,786).
 - Drive-thru: (2,372) items were circulated August 2022; a decrease of 26% (3,221) over last year in June.
- Electronic Content Use: 16,005 (5,505 use of electronic material- Hoopla & Overdrive) and (10,500- database usage* note* we do not have Consumer Reports stats available yet). This is a 7% increase over July 2022, a 79% increase over August 2021 (5,610 use of electronic material- Hoopla & Overdrive and 3,337- database usage).

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND STEWARDSHIP

Business Office:

- We received a Draft copy of the Audit on September 14, and we hope to have a final copy soon. We should plan on the Auditor making a presentation to the full board in October.

Alarm System Upgrade

- Capital Security upgraded our alarm panel, changing to a network-based communication with cell backup. This solves an issue we were having with phone communication and allows us to discontinue our two remaining Spectrum phone lines. The new panel also introduces an option to upgrade later for self-management of many functions via an app.

IT Security Audit/Security Procedures and Training for Staff

- To qualify for a more robust Cyber Security Insurance policy, we must update several IT security functions, including the implementation of multi-factor authentication for all accounts. This has proven to be extremely tricky, especially since we have numerous shared accounts (ex: one iPad (used for story-time) is shared among several staff; one reference desk log-in for substitute staff; etc.). As a result, we are investigating firms to audit our IT security structure/practices and make recommendations to improve.
- In the meantime, we are developing an information/guideline document for staff on security procedures. This is intended to inform staff of internal procedures already in place, and ongoing expectations regarding IT security.
- Karrie has investigated several cybersecurity training resources, and we have selected KnowBe4 platform. This will allow us to provide recurring, customized training for staff. Special thanks to Karrie for unexpectedly adding this large and time-sensitive project to her duties!

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND CULTURE OF LEARNING/GROWTH

PERSONNEL

Staff- New Hires/Training/Opening

- Elizabeth Putnam agreed to fill-in on a substitute basis, for Librarian I, effective August 20.
- Michael Thoma accepted the Part-Time Building Maintenance Worker position and began August 22.
- Heather Nelson accepted the Full-Time Adult Services Librarian position and began September 13.

TECHNOLOGY

Google Analytics 4

- The Digital Services team is learning the ins and outs of the new Google Analytics to use updated features to track marketing campaigns and resource usage.

Link on Public Website to Intranet for Staff

- There is now a link on the social media section of the public website for staff to navigate directly to the intranet (password protected).

Power Failure Procedure

- The general power failure procedure has been updated to include post-power failure IT troubleshooting for non-IT staff.

MARKETING/PUBLICITY

Marketing Strategy- Evaluation

- The Digital Services team (Susan, Selena, Karrie) have been working on creating a marketing strategy and measuring the output.
- Ancestry video is complete for September release and Tech-Talk video is in progress.
- Month 1 showed little difference in registration and usage before and after social medial PR; exceptions were e-news and Robly emails.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

TECHNOLOGY

Website SEO & Accessibility

- Using a website plugin to assist us in boosting our page's search engine optimization. Includes editing meta descriptions and optimizing links and images.
- Recent webinars have provided helpful tools and instructions for improving the library's website accessibility, and we are implementing as many as reasonably possible.
- Adding print-friendly capability to webpages and webforms. Unfortunately, caching kept causing it to break. We have contacted our website consulting firm: Web Instinct for assistance.

Wi-Fi Access Point

- An additional Wi-Fi Access point for the Patio was installed on August 26.

Meeting Room A/B AV Installation

- Installation began July 28, but two pieces of hardware were faulty and needed to be reordered. New installation was September 8. Unfortunately, the teleconferencing component of the hardware is not yet working. Karrie is working with AV Corps to rectify.
- Shure microphones have not yet arrived.

MARKETING/PUBLICITY

Library Card Sign-Up Month

- September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. To celebrate we have giveaways and a chance to win a \$25 gift card! A marketing campaign is underway digitally, in print, and in person. Susan attended Bike with a Cop event on September 11 to distribute crafts, library materials, and sign up for enews.
- Adults who sign up to get their first library card during the month of September get a water bottle (while supplies last) and a chance to win a \$25 gift card.
- Kids who get their first card during the month of September get a goody bag & coupon for Stewart's ice cream!
- For patrons who already have a library card, during the month of September, Upper Hudson Library System (UHLS) card holders can also enter for a chance to win a gift card by sharing their favorite EG Library perks on their FB page using the hashtag #GetYourEGLCard.
- Why Get a Library Card? For The Perks Of Course!
 - 24/7 access to eBooks, movies, games (video & board), music & magazines
 - Free internet access, Wi-Fi, computers, laptop/hotspot lending
 - Access to online subscriptions (some also available in print) like Consumer Reports, Times Unions, NY Times, Ancestry, America's News + MORE.
 - Access to research articles & databases
 - Books plus expert reading recommendations
 - Low or no-cost business services such as Notary (call ahead) and print/fax/scanning

PARTNERSHIPS

Little Free Library

- Two Little Free Libraries have been installed along the Rail Trail. Purchased Little Free Library registry signs. Official kick-off TBD. Marketing will be scheduled for “naming contest” sometime in October/November. When the names are finalized, the locations will be added to Little Free Library world map. Thank you, Camie, Susan, and Jamie!

Cornell Cooperative Extension

- Karrie is working with the Digital Literacy trainer for Cornell Cooperative Extension to schedule classes for the community.
- Upcoming class topics; staying safe on social media (October), shopping safely online (November), finding reliable information online and in your inbox (December).

East Greenbush Police Department (EGPD)

- Partnered with EGPD for several events: Drug Take Back, EGPD Cook Out, EGPD Meet K-9, Bike with a Cop (several other partners including YMCA and Kiwanis Club).
- Susan provided marketing materials and events have been cross promoted through Library and Town networks.

State University of New York at Albany, Department of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, Cybersecurity

- I was interviewed over Zoom for Public Librarianship graduate school class taught by Abby Adams on August 22.

Vanguard ASO- Instrument Donation

- Susan worked with Jill Rifkin at Vanguard ASO to collect musical instruments which will be distributed to youth in need on September 14.
- Event was cross promoted with the East Greenbush Central School District, library channels, and radio.

Capital District Library Council

- I was appointed a member of the Regional Automation Advisory Committee (RAAC) for the Capital District Library Council (CDLC) which is a consortium of all types of libraries and museums. This appointment is a three-year term. RAAC advises CDLC, the Board, and members on specific aspects of CDLC programs and services relating to library automation and information technology.
- RAAC supports the mission of CDLC by partnering with members to strengthen library service through education, shared collections, and local connections.
- RAAC facilitates education, communication, and discussion of library automation and technology developments, technologies, issues, and concerns among member libraries as outlined in the CDLC Plan of Service.
- A responsibility of the Committee is to review and recommend annual RBDB-funded priorities considering regional needs as outlined in CDLC’s Five-Year Plan of Service.
- Currently the RAAC has 15 members from the following libraries/museums: NYS Military Museum, Retired from GE Library, Museum of Innovation & Science, Guilderland Public Library, RPI, HVCC, Union College, Mohawk Valley Library System, Siena College, University at Albany,

Southern Adirondack Library System, Albany College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences, Troy Public Library, and The Sage Colleges.

Meeting Rooms

- Karrie and Selena have schedule meeting room training sessions for staff during September, and we plan to open Meeting Rooms to the public in October.
- Paul, Karrie, and Jill are finishing up room prep. Special thanks to Karrie for spearheading this project, Selena for assistance with training, Kathy (meeting room coordinator) who will be training Susan for back-up purposes, Marion and the entire Circulation team who have agree to jump in and be an integral part of meeting room check-ins, and for the many other staff who have contributed by brainstorming, documenting new procedures, testing new procedures, prepping the spaces, and finally- training all staff. We are looking forward to a smooth soft launch in October with all new technology!

LIFELONG CURIOSITY, IMAGINATION AND LEARNING

COLLECTIONS

I'm Your Neighbor Welcoming Library Rotating Collection

- The Welcoming Library Collection from I'm Your Neighbor is Upper Hudson's newest rotating collection. We are scheduled to host for the month of October!
- This collection of 30 picture books featuring New Arrival and New American families comes with its own display unit. Discussion questions in each book and programming ideas are also part of the package.
- The Youth Services department will be hosting this wonderful collection which has received patron enthusiasm and good circulation from other libraries.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday Night Book Chat

- Lauren Kozilski has taken over Wednesday Night Book Chat from Catherine. Thank you, Lauren! Also, thank you to Catherine who spearheaded this phenomenal program during the pandemic which connected patrons to each other when in-person book discussions were not feasible. This program is still going strong with 60 participants on average!

Summer Reading Program (SRP) June 27-Aug. 12- Oceans of Possibility

- Summer was wildly successful! It felt like pre-COVID times and staff from every department played an important role. Special thanks to the Youth Services, Circulation, and Adult Services Teams who were on the front lines. Typically, when the Summer Reading Program ends in early August, the library is quieter, and many staff take vacations in late August. This year, it was unusually busy, and our staff, even though short-staffed, never missed a beat. We spend months planning Summer Reading, implementing Summer Reading, and finally evaluating Summer Reading. It is a labor of love, simultaneously exhilarating and exhausting. Our library was vibrant, busy, and community members were heavily engaged with our space and collections. Our team rocks!

FOR ADULTS

- The Adult Summer Reading Program ended on August 12.
- 195 adults participated (183 patrons and 12 staff) in separate challenges.
- 46% of participants identified East Greenbush as their town of residence (8% Schodack, 7% Castleton).
- 6 gift card grand prizes and 1 grand prize basket were awarded. The most popular prize was the Target gift card.

A few highlights from the evaluations:

What did you like most about the program/service?

- "It pushed me to read books from genres and authors I usually wouldn't"
- "The new category of Pride. Learned something new"
- "The summer program was very enjoyable. The only thing I disagreed with was the inclusion of Pride Month as part of the program"
- "I like being able to show my girls that adults get a lot out of reading to."
- "Bonding with my daughter reading aloud together"
- "I like how the challenge push[ed] me out of my comfort zone and encourage[d] me to choose texts I might not know about otherwise"
- "I liked learning about the different research resources"
- "I also like getting badges for achievements as it was nostalgic and reminded me of fun reading challenges from childhood"

FOR KIDS & TEENS

- Summer Reading was back in full force for 2022, with a combination of indoor as well as outdoor programming for children and teens.
- We had 70 events for children from the last week in June through the end of August, with an attendance of 3,004 patrons.
- There were 16 programs for middle & high schoolers, with 258 teens attending. 12 of these programs consisted of a Summer Science Series which was generously funded with a grant from the Rensselaer Elks Lodge #2073.
- We also continued our popular Take & Make Crafts, offering 10 different craft projects during the summer, distributing a total of 969 kits.
- Children who came into the library had plenty of activities to keep them busy while visiting – our monthly scavenger hunt continues to be a hit, with 975 people participating during the months of July and August.
- We also gave kids the option of "adopting" a seashell for the summer to be their reading buddy, and 210 children took a shell home to read to.
- The maker cart located in the Children's Room was well used, with kids using the art supplies offered to create projects all summer long.
- The much-missed playroom was also open again and saw a steady stream of children and caregivers engaging in imaginative play.
- The highlight of the summer for many patrons was our chicken incubation project! We began incubating eggs at the end of June and ended up with seven healthy chickens. The chickens stayed in the Children's Room for about two weeks, and all ages enjoyed visiting them in person and watching the chick cam live on YouTube as well.

- Participation in the actual Summer Reading Challenge was good, with 610 children and 165 middle and high school students registering for the challenge. Patrons could choose to log their activities and minutes reading on a paper reading record, or by using Beanstack, our online tracker. By reading and completing different activities, kids earned buttons to add to their reading ribbons as well as raffle entries into the grand prize raffles.
- We couldn't have done it all without the help of our 53 teen volunteers this summer, who volunteered 680 hours of their time helping with programs, shelving books, and handing out buttons and prizes.
- Our Youth Services team has been consistently providing the best library programs and services for youth in the area for years. It happens year-round, but especially in the summer. Thank you, Molly, Jen, Jenna, Joelle, Elizabeth, and Jessica!

A few highlights from the evaluations:

What did you like most about the program?

- "Earning badges and reading books! (My daughter was very motivated to read because of this reading challenge!)"
- "I liked the volunteers. They were super nice"
- "I liked attending library activities with kids my age who had similar interests"
- "The program pushed us to read new things! We also enjoyed the games in the library each week like the scavenger hunts!"
- "The librarians are always very helpful! Loved this reading program with the raffle ticket incentives!"
- "I liked that you could do it online or on paper (online is so much better for me) I also loved the books I picked out to read because they were LGBTQ2+ books"
- "I loved reading every day and coming to the library to pick out new books. I loved being able to add badges to my necklace! This helped to make my summer so fun"
- "We enjoyed coming to the library to swap out books check in on the baby chicks and do the scavenger hunts"
- "It gives more incentive to read but also gives ideas and things you can do for activities. I (as the parent) learned the library has so much more to offer than I knew!"
- "These programs make learning reading and so much more FUN! I liked doing the Tween & Teen for the summer reading challenge. Reading and getting rewards and prizes made me really happy. Because of this I went to the library a lot. I love it!"

AUGUST Library Sponsored Programs:

Teens: 5 programs; 140 attendees

- Author Visit: Read if Forward; Lauren Wolk: 8 participants
- Ocean Ecology with Via Aquarium (sponsored by Rensselaer County Elks): 36 participants
- Workshop: Tie Dye: 24 participants
- Volunteer Appreciation Party: 20 participants
- Summer Reading Challenge: 52 participants

Children: 17 programs; 31 sessions, 2,304 attendees

- Farmer's Market Crafts: 2 sessions, 46 participants
- Friday Fun Under the Tent: 4 sessions; 196 participants

- Ocean Ecology with Via Aquarium (sponsored by Rensselaer County Elks): 47 participants
- Puppet Show: The Elephant Child (sponsored by Stewarts Holiday Match): 58 participants
- Saturday Fun Under the Tent (outdoor): 3 sessions; 93 participants
- Scavenger Hunt: 406 participants
- Summer Reading Kids: 178 participants
- Take & Make Crafts: 5 sessions; 518 participants
- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten: 46 participants
- Book Bundles- Kids: 8 participants
- Author Visit: Hello, Puddle with Anita Sanchez (sponsored by Rensselaer County Elks): 27 participants
- Indoor Storytime: 2 sessions; 120 participants
- Outdoor Storytime: 2 sessions; 66 participants
- Messy Monday- Arts & Crafts: 2 sessions; 71 participants
- Pajama Storytime: 19 participants
- Playtime (drop-in; meeting room): 2 sessions; 158 participants
- Meet Baseball Players with Tri City Valley Cats: 37 participants

Adults: 11 programs; 25 sessions; 216 attendees; attendance not captured at 7 events

- ENL: English as a New Language: 6 sessions; 24 participants
- Workshop- AARP Smart Driver Class: 20 participants
- Workshop: Arts & Crafts for Grownups- Keepsake Box: 11 participants
- Workshop: Paint the Sound- Music & Art: 10 participants
- Wednesday Night Book Chat (Facebook): 5 sessions; 83 participants
- Concert: Outdoors Blues Concert with Roben/Kosek: 53 participants
- Book a Librarian 1-1 session(s): 2 sessions; 2 participants
- Virtual Trivia (Zoom): 13 participants
- Farmers' Market: 5 days; attendance not captured
- Tech Talk Webinar: Job Hunting- How to Get to the Top of the Pile: attendance not captured
- Tech Talk Webinar: Secrets of Password Managers: attendance not captured

Respectfully Submitted,
Jill Dugas Hughes