

The Ayer Library

Director's Report for June 2020

Current Operations at the Library as of June 30th.

- Library staff are working at the Ayer Library Tuesday through Friday from 10 AM to 5 PM and Saturday from 10 AM to 2 PM. The library building remains closed to the public but, as of June 9th, curbside pickup of books, DVDs, and other physical items is available by appointment. More details are available on the Library's website (ayerlibrary.org) and on our Facebook page.
- Book drops are open to accept returns. No late fees will be charged on overdue items.
- All in-person Library programs scheduled through the month of July have been canceled or postponed, but video Story Times and other programs continue, and more are in the works for the summer and fall months.
- Even though the building is closed, library staff members are available to fill requests for books and DVDs to be picked up curbside, to help answer questions, or assist you with online library materials, etc.
- To request assistance from one of our staff members
 - By telephone: Please call 978-772-8250.
 - By email: Send your message to ayerlibrary@cwmar.org and someone will be in touch with you as soon as possible.
 - On Facebook: Message us or post a question to www.facebook.com/AyerLibrary and someone will respond as soon as possible.
- The Library's WIFI network remains on and available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. The signal extends far enough to cover the library parking lot.
- **Summer Reading is underway!** The Library launched online Summer Reading programs for kids and adults on June 29th. This year, all Summer Reading programs will use **Beanstack**, a fun, easy way to keep track of your books and activities and earn badges and prizes. You can download the **Beanstack** app, which allows you to scan the ISBN barcodes of books to quickly update the list of books that you've read and track your progress. Visit the Library's website or call us for more information!
- We are still only able to loan items that we have in our building but we expect statewide delivery to resume in July! The Massachusetts Library System is working with Optima, the delivery contractor, to coordinate the re-start of the delivery service that moves books and other materials between libraries throughout the state.

Library Operations:

- Despite all of the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff of the Ayer Library have been working hard to restore library services. Here are some of the actions we've taken in order to operate safely while doing so:
 - The staff is divided into two teams of five, with the teams working alternating days to maintain separation.
 - Returned items are being quarantined on tables in the historic Reading Room for 72 hours before being re-shelved or checked out to another patron.

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- Workstations and desk surfaces are being cleaned by staff at the end of each day, if not more frequently, in addition to the disinfecting provided by our cleaning contractor on a daily basis.
 - Staff members do their best to remain physically distant from each other while working, and wear face masks inside the building when they can't do so.
- Developing procedures and purchasing supplies for safely re-opening the library to staff, setting up a schedule for staffing and for curbside pickup has been an enormous challenge. Most of the credit for planning it all out goes to Assistant Director Samantha Benoit. She also deserves credit for hand-sewing more than two dozen masks for staff to take and use or share as needed.
- The Youth Services team, led by Amy Leonard, has been focused on reconnecting with the community. Among their accomplishments are:
 - Contacting program providers and exploring virtual options for programming.
 - Working with the ASRSD administrators and teachers to revise summer reading lists for students, and then purchasing physical and digital copies of needed materials.
 - Creating "take-away" crafts that are now being distributed at the curbside pickup table.
- Head of Adult Services Barbara Cheeks spearheaded the rethinking and redesigning our popular Summer Reading program as an all-ages online event in short order while learning a brand-new software product called Beanstack well enough to set it up and teach other staff members to use it.
- Circulation and Outreach Librarian Christina Zoller is involved in just about everything that goes on at the Library, but chief among her duties in June was producing and posting all of the Library's social media and online marketing.
- After purchasing very few physical items over the two-plus months we were closed, we are once again receiving shipments of new books, DVDs, and other physical materials. Circulation Librarians Thomas Tagliavento and Justine Paulson have taken on the bulk of the processing of all of the new items we are now receiving. More than 300 new items arrived in June and were added to the catalog, labeled, covered, and/or otherwise prepared to go into circulation. Thomas is also responsible for keeping much of the library's website up to date, and Justine has been assisting with expense tracking and other necessary tasks.
- Library Clerks Sumedha, Eben, Keith, and Nadia have been invaluable in providing customer service over the phones, assisting with new materials processing, reorganizing parts of the collection and locating missing items through careful shelf-reading, and many many other tasks.
- Everyone is assisting with the contactless curbside service. Once items have been selected and checked out to a patron, they are bagged up, labeled, and placed on a

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table outside the Library's main entrance where the requesting patron can pick them up at the appointed time.

Library Director's Activities:

- I have been working with Assistant Director Samantha Benoit to begin wrapping up the FY2020 accounting and reporting, and preparing for FY2021 as well.
- I continue to troubleshoot IT problems and to investigate options for improving our IT infrastructure. Our IT shortcomings have been laid bare during this pandemic, when nearly all of us had to rely on our personal devices to "meet" virtually, even now that we've returned to the Library building.
- Samantha, Amy Leonard, Barbara Cheeks and I met via a conference call each week in June to check in and plan.
- I participated in a public Zoom meeting hosted by Ayer Office of Economic & Community Development Director Alan Manoian on June 1st. We discussed community needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic that might be addressed through funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The following week I submitted a proposal to purchase twenty-five wireless hot spots with two-year service contracts that would be loaned to community members that lack good internet at their homes.
- I attended the Annual Town Meeting at ASRHS on June 15th.
- I participated in CWMARS Users' Council meeting via Zoom on June 16th. We reviewed and voted on a number of policy updates.
- The Ayer Library Board of Trustees met via Zoom on June 18, 2020. The meeting recording is available on the Ayer Public Access Corporation (APAC) website.

Library Maintenance:

- Able Landscapers continued to mow and maintain the library grounds.
- All-Pro Cleaning resumed daily janitorial service to the building.
- Ayer Director of Facilities Maintenance Chuck Schultz came by on June 8 to finish some minor repairs to a bathroom ceiling and to install a dispenser of COVID-19 appropriate janitorial cleaning supplies and disinfectants for our cleaning company (and staff) to use.
- On June 29th MassCor Industries delivered and installed a new Main Circulation Desk.
- On June 29th, Johnson Controls performed seasonal maintenance on the Library's HVAC system – cleaning/changing filters, etc – and repaired the A/C unit in the Historical Room, which had stopped working the week prior.

Respectfully,

Tim Silva
Library Director