

The Ayer Library

Director's Report for July 2020

July Updates to Library Operations

- Summer Reading is in full swing: Weekly prizes for children- including stuffed octopi and pullback racers – are made available for pickup at the curbside table. The numbers of participants in Beanstack are as follows:
 - Adults: 59 people 197 badges earned 117 books logged
 - Children 74 people 214 badges earned 327 books logged
 - Young Adults 18 people 88 badges earned 56 books logged
- In addition to summer reading prizes, we've distributed a new Curbside Crafts different every week for kids and teens. These include "make your own board game", "build a pipe cleaner tower", "dancing figures art", and "embroidery bracelets". Credit goes to Circulation Librarian Justine Paulson for her craft design expertise and her team of staff craft testers for their work.
- We provided more than 700 "curbside pickup" bags to patrons in July. Each instance of curbside service requires a staff person to take the request, then retrieve, place a hold, and/or select the item(s) requested, contacting the requesting patron to schedule a pickup date & time, and then checking out and packaging up the materials for curbside pickup.
- Head of Youth Services Amy Leonard worked with the Ayer Cultural Council to adjust the requirements of the grant we received for summer programming to accommodate online replacements for the in-person programming we'd planned to do.
- In late July we sent out a community-wide press release to raise awareness of our current services.
- As of July 21st we've been able to receive materials from other libraries for Ayer patrons and send our materials in transit to patrons of other CWMARS libraries. The Massachusetts Library System, working with Optima, the delivery contractor, has restored the delivery service throughout the state. On a normal day we might receive two or three boxes of items in delivery; we received 13 boxes in our first delivery since March.
- With the new Main Circulation Desk in place, Assistant Director Samantha Benoit and Circulation & Outreach Librarian Christina Zoller have measured for shields to be placed on the desks and are seeking quotes for their manufacture.
- Samantha and I met with Director of Facilities Maintenance Chuck Shultz on July 24th to review emergency plans and what additional supplies and equipment we still needed to have on hand before we could consider safely re-opening the building to the public. We also discussed ideas for acquiring a more robust structure than our current canopy tent (e.g. a modified garden shed) to allow for continued curbside service into the fall and winter months.

"Normal" COVID-19 Operations at the Library

- 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

The Ayer Library

Director's Report for July 2020

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 August 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.
- The staff of the Ayer Library continue to work hard to restore library services while also working safely:
 - 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.
 - 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.

Library Director's Activities:

- In preparation for the renewal of our cleaning services contract at the end of July, I sought and received quotes from two additional cleaning companies. I ultimately renewed our contract with the current service provider because it remained significantly less expensive than the other quotes and the service has been satisfactory.
- Samantha and I met on July 24th to review our individual assessments of the library's staff positions using the Town's Position and Classification Manual.
- Samantha, Amy, and Head of Adult Services Barbara Cheeks and I met on July 8th, 15th, 23rd, and 29th to share information and plan projects for the coming weeks. Our focus in July has been to make sure everyone is comfortable with the procedures for curbside delivery and to think about how to communicate better with our patrons without the benefit of regular in-person service.

The Ayer Library

Director's Report for July 2020

- Circulation Librarian Thomas Tagliavento added a link to *Wowbrary* to the Library's website. Wowbrary is a service that highlights our new acquisitions – print books, DVDs, and soon, ebooks and digital magazines - each week in an email newsletter that patrons can sign up to receive. Upon receiving the newsletter, patrons can click on titles that interest them and be taken directly to the library catalog where they can place a request for the item!
- Barbara is currently evaluating several email newsletter services to see which one best fits the Library's needs.
- I participated in a Zoom meeting hosted by Ayer Office of Economic & Community Development Director Alan Manoian on July 9th regarding the Town's current work to update its American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan. Staff from the Montachusett Regional Planning will be visiting public buildings and facilities throughout the town over the next 4-6 weeks to document compliance (or lack thereof) with the ADA standards. Alan will coordinate the visits with the appropriate Town department heads.
- I participated in CWMARS Directors' meeting via Zoom on July 15th where the discussion centered around current status of delivery and curbside services.
- The Ayer Library Board of Trustees met via Zoom on July 16, 2020. The meeting recording is available on the Ayer Public Access Corporation (APAC) website.
- I was on vacation from June 30th through July 6th.

Library Maintenance:

- Able Landscapers continued to mow and maintain the library grounds, including three days spent weeding the planting beds and cutting back the brush along and atop the chain link fence bordering the parking lot.
- On July 29th, Groton Pest Control visited the library to treat for wood roaches.

My thanks to Amy Leonard, Barbara Cheeks and Samantha Benoit for their contributions to this report.

Respectfully,

Tim Silva
Library Director