

The Ayer Library

Director's Report for December 2020

December Updates to Library Operations

- **New “Curbside Branch” 8’ x 10’ shed installed adjacent to the Library entrance**
 - On December 10th, a crew of three from Eastern Shed Company of North Andover assembled a custom-designed garden shed at the library. The shed is going to make it easier for staff to provide ongoing curbside pickup, especially during the winter when snow and wind make the use of our canopy tent impractical. The additional space provided by the shed will allow us to put out more curbside orders at once while also giving us plenty for room for curbside craft kits and additional information about library and community services.
 - Ayer’s Director of Facilities Maintenance Chuck Shultz added shelving on December 16th. We’ll be adding bulletin boards, and other finishing touches to the shed’s interior to make it ready for service.
 - Once weather permits, we will finish the wooden exterior of the shed with a wood-preserving stain and paint the doors and trim to keep it looking good for the duration of its use in this location. Once the shed is no longer needed for COVID-19 service, it will be moved elsewhere on the library grounds and likely repurposed to provide storage for items more typically found in sheds, such as tools and supplies for grounds maintenance.
- Curbside bags picked up in December: 387
- The Winter Edition of the Library’s email newsletter was sent out on December 4th. The newsletter contained updates on services and programming, and introduced the concept of *hygge*:
 - A quality of coziness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling of contentment or well-being (regarded as a defining characteristic of Danish culture).
 - The Ayer Library will have crafts & information for all ages to help you embrace hygge. You can also ask for books, movies and cookbooks that will help you enjoy hygge.
- You can now borrow board and card games from the Library! We’ve been working to add our collection of board games and card games formerly only available for use inside the Library to the Evergreen catalog so that they may be checked out and taken home.
- Updated the Kids Play Page on our website with new links to learning content and games.
- December Kids Book Bundle Themes: Cooking & Family Traditions
- Adult Creative Crafting: Shiplap ornament. (This was the most popular adult craft kit to date – all 22 craft kits were taken!)
- Strega Mama Story Time: Tomie Depaola’s *Magic Pasta Pot* 12/3/20
- Video Story Time with Library Clerk Eben Goldman:
 - 12/10/20 - *Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins*
 - 12/24/20 - *The Bear Who Didn’t Want to Miss Christmas*
- Kids and Teen Curbside Crafts for December:
 - Teen - Pom Pom Snowmen, BookPage sphere ornaments, jingle bell bracelets, jingle bell earrings

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- Kids - Paper Chef hats, Thumbprint cookie recipe card craft, Hanukkah menorahs, Elf Winter Story author books, Gingerbread puppet, Polar Express Train tickets placemats (and Facebook story link), New Year's party hats.
- The Library was closed on December 17th due to a snowstorm.
- The Library was closed December 24th – 26th for the Christmas holiday and December 31st - January 2nd for the New Year's holiday.

"Normal" COVID-19 Operations at the Library

- Library staff are working at the Ayer Library Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 10 AM to 5 PM, Wednesday from noon to 7 PM, and Saturday from 10 AM to 2 PM. The library building remains closed to the public but, since June 9th, curbside pickup of books, DVDs, and other physical items is available by appointment.
- Faxing, photocopying, and document printing are also available at curbside. 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 fall months have been canceled or postponed, but video Story Times and other online programs continue, and more are in the works for the fall and winter 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.

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Library Director's Activities:

- FY2022 Operating Budget: The Library Board of Trustees approved a level-funded draft operating budget request for the Library on December 3rd. I submitted the budget request to the Town Manager's office on December 4th.
- I attended a CWMARS Users' Council Meeting via Zoom on December 1st. A quorum of member libraries approved the consortium's operating budget and member assessments for FY2022.
- The Ayer Library Board of Trustees met via Zoom on December 3, 2020. The meeting recording is available on the Ayer Public Access Corporation (APAC) website.
- On Wednesday, December 9th, I attended the Town of Ayer's Department Heads' Meeting via Zoom.
- On Tuesday, December 14th, I attended a training webinar on compliance with the Open Meeting Law presented by the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office.
- The Library's administrative STAB (Samantha, Tim, Amy, Barbara) team met virtually on December 4th, 11th, and 30th. In December we continued reviewing and discussing changes to our ordering procedures for the library collection and for other supplies. We are investigating ways to be eliminate mistakes and be more efficient when it comes to cataloging and preparing new collection items for circulation.

Library Maintenance:

- Renaud Electric inspected the Library's emergency lighting system and made a few minor repairs on December 14th & 15th.
- Keystone Elevator made a pre-inspection visit on December 23rd, then performed the annual safety inspection on the Library's elevator with the State Inspector and Easton Electronics on December 29th.
- Easton Electronics completed the annual inspection of the Library's fire alarm and sprinkler system on December 29th.
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My thanks to Amy Leonard, Barbara Cheeks, Samantha Benoit, and the rest of the Ayer Library staff for their contributions to this report.

Respectfully,

Tim Silva
Library Director