

The Ayer Library

Director's Report for January 2022

Current operations:

- As of December 20, 2021, the Library is following the Town of Ayer's mask mandate. All library visitors must wear masks within the building. If you are unable to wear a mask, please contact us for assistance or to request curbside service.
- We continue to offer curbside pickup service via the Curbside Shed. The default pickup location for requested items is the Main Desk once again. Please call us to have your requested items placed in the shed.
- The Friends' Book Sale Room – now officially renamed the Friends' Book Cellar - on the Ground Floor is open once again.
- The Reading Room in the historic wing of the building remains closed to the public until we can repair the plaster ceiling that partially collapsed in May.
- Public programs remain virtual at least through the end of the calendar year.

January Updates

- **REDUCED HOURS** - Effective February 1st: Due to a staffing shortage, the Library will close two hours earlier than usual on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings for the months of February and March. Our hours will be as follows:
 - Tuesday- Thursday 10 AM – 6 PM, Friday 10 AM- 5 PM, Saturday 10 AM – 2 PM
- We have re-started in-person Story Time on Thursday mornings with Head of Youth Services Amy Leonard and some of our regular programmers, including Strega Mama:
 - 1/6/22 No Two Alike 16 patrons
 - 1/13/22 A Hat for Minerva Louise 17 patrons
 - 1/20/22 Strega Mama: Mo Willems, funded by The Friends of the Ayer Library 31 patrons
 - 1/27/22 Little Wolf's Song 21 patrons
 - We had scheduled Ayer Family Partnership's Music and Movement program to be part of Story Time, but they went virtual for January 2022. We're hoping to bring them back in February.
- Curbside pick-ups: 52
- Kids Craft: Cardinal handprint 30 (kits taken), penguin masks 30, mitten scavenger hunt 35, New: Baby Bug Cricket magazine and ZooBooks, passive LLama poster, Chicken crown 40, Chicken packet 25, Elephant & Piggie coloring 25, DIY book 30, stick puppets 40, wolf hand puppet 35
- Teen Craft: New magazine J-14, Mandala coloring 30, feather peeps 15
- Kids Displays: winter/snowflakes, Chinese New Year, YA Difficult Topics, YA MetroWest OUT link to LGBTQ book club, Squirrel Day 1/21, Groundhog Day
- Adult Craft: Hand warmers 20
- Spice Kits: Chaat Massala 20
- Adult Book Displays: *Ice, sleet, and snow oh No!*, *Big Books Last Longer than New Year's resolutions*, *Escape room theme*, *Financial wellness*

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- Adult Book Group: Re-launched as a hybrid in-person and Zoom program on January 26th. The first book read was *Bear Town* by Fredrik Backman. 3 in-person attendees, 1 via Zoom.
- Adult Brain Bundle Puzzle Packets: 25 (Another 75 packets were copied and distributed to inmates and staff at the Souza -Baranowski Correctional Center according to SBCC librarian Lisa Castoldi)

- Schedule:
 - The Library closed on Friday, January 7, due to a snow storm.
 - The Library closed on Saturday, January 15th in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

- Behind the Scenes:
 - On January 5th, Assistant Director Samantha Benoit and I attended a Zoom information session about Kanopy, a streaming service that offers access to movies and television shows from hundreds of independent studios and production companies. Our library network C/WMARS has been negotiating with Kanopy for discounted subscription fees for member libraries. The pay-per-checkout model that Kanopy uses is appealing because it makes it possible for libraries to add access to the entire Kanopy library to its collection without a large up-front investment.
 - New event calendar, museum pass, and room reservation system. We ran into a snag when trying to integrate Assabet Interactive's modules into our website and had to wait until our website host Influx Library User Experience could make some changes to our website platform. The new modules were installed and activated on January 25th. Staff orientation and public roll-out will take place in early February.
 - Head of Adult services Barbara Cheeks, Circulation Librarian Heidi Flynn, Amy Leonard and I met on January 18th to go over procedures for marketing and communicating our events and services to the public. With the departure of Christina Zoller in December, Heidi has taken over most of the responsibility for posting information to the Library's Facebook page and keeping the Library's website content current.
 - Circulation Librarian Heidi Flynn and I attended a patron privacy workshop hosted by C/WMARS via Zoom on January 27th. The workshop's goal was to get library staff to think about how to protect patron privacy with respect to both paper records - such as library card application forms - and online data.
 - Personnel
 - Library Clerks Anna Leonard and Nadia Nalesnik returned to university in mid-January. Nadia continues to work reduced hours but Anna will not be available again until the end of the spring semester.
 - Former volunteer Abigail Turner joined the Library staff as a part-time Library clerk on January 22nd. Welcome Abigail!
 - New Volunteer: Nathan Baptista started January 19th. Welcome Nathan!

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- Head of Youth Services Amy Leonard, Head of Adult Services Barbara Cheeks, and Assistant Director Samantha Benoit interviewed candidates for the vacant Circulation Librarian (Youth Services) position.
- Maintenance & Repair
 - Technicians from Moore Enterprises and Lookout Security diagnosed and repaired a phone line problem affecting the Library's intrusion alarm on January 20th.
 - Historic Reading Room Ceiling Repair: There has been no change in the tentative scheduling of the repair work. As of January 31st, the Town's Capital Planning Committee has approved the Library's request for \$48,500 to make the necessary repairs. These funds would be available following the Annual Town Meeting on April 25th, provided the voters approve the capital budget.

Library Director's Activities:

- Meetings:
 - Town of Ayer Department Heads meeting via Zoom on January 12th.
 - The Ayer Library Board of Trustees monthly meeting via Zoom on Thursday, January 20th.
 - I joined the rest of the Town of Ayer's Department Heads in attending the first public forum for the Town's FY2023 Operating Budget on January 27th via Zoom. Following an overview by the Town Manager, members of the Select Board and Finance Committee and members of the public were able to ask questions about the contents of the budget. There were few questions, none of which related to the Library.

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