

The David and Joyce Milne Public Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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DIRECTOR's Welcome

As we begin the new year, I am proud to reflect on the incredible progress and growth that our library has experienced, especially as we recently celebrated our 150th anniversary. This significant milestone has given us the opportunity to honor our rich history while looking ahead to the future. The anniversary celebration was a time to recognize our long-standing commitment to serving the community, as well as the countless stories, ideas, and innovations that have been shared within our walls over the years.

In addition to this historic occasion, we have continued our mission to foster lifelong learning, build community connections, and provide access to knowledge and resources for all. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, the support of our community, and the trust of our patrons, we have made great strides in enhancing our programs, services, and facilities. From expanding our hours and services to creating a more inclusive and accessible environment for all, every initiative last year focused on strengthening the impact of our library in meaningful ways.

As we reflect on the services, programs, and connections made possible at the David & Joyce Milne Public Library, we are filled with gratitude for the many individuals who bring this work to life – our dedicated staff, Board members, Friends of the Library, volunteers, partners, donors, elected officials, and community members. It is because of your ongoing support that we continue to serve our incredible community, and we are honored to share some of these achievements in our 2024 Annual Report.

This year-end report highlights the milestones we've reached and offers a preview of the exciting work yet to come. Looking ahead, we remain committed to being a vibrant space that fosters creativity, learning, and connection for everyone in our community.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. We are excited to carry forward the momentum we have built and look forward to all the opportunities this new year holds.

Warm regards,

Angela Zimmermann

Library Director, The David & Joyce Milne Public Library

STAFF AT Milne Public Library

NEW

this year!



Angela Zimmermann
Library Director



Brianna Christie
Marketing &
Communication Strategist



Oliver Bingemann
Library Service Specialist



Olivia Zoito
Library Service Specialist

Kirsten Rose

Assistant Library Director

Jenna English

Circulation Manager

Debbie Baker

Children's Librarian

Rocio Carrera

Teen Librarian

Alex Charron

Building & Grounds Supervisor

Katie Gentry

Library Service Specialist

Denny Meneghelli

Substitute Library Service Specialist

Debbie Monahan

Library Service Specialist

Patt Patterson

Library Service Specialist

Quin Repetto

Library Service Specialist

Ella Smith

Library Service Specialist

Sam White

Library Service Specialist

Kira Williams

Adult Services Librarian & Volunteer Coordinator

BOARD OF Trustees



Micah Manary

Board Chair & DEI Committee Member

Jared Della Rocca

Vice Chair

Anna Halpin-Healy

Treasurer

Katy Evans

Secretary & Chair of DEI Committee

Ben Lee-Cohen

Buildings & Grounds Committee Member

Robin Lenz

Chair of Buildings & Grounds Committee

Bridget Spann

2024 by the Numbers

Items Checked Out

90,502

Door Counts

90,106

New Library Cards

408

New Items

4,961

Fulfilled Holds

15,307

eBooks, Audiobooks,
& Streaming

28,509

Usage of Library
Computers

**991 hrs. &
28 min.**

Usage of Tech Times

124

PROGRAMMING

This Year

Programs Offered

334

Program Attendees

5,045

2024 Summer
Reading Participants

150 kids

★ 1,065 raffle tickets turned into prizes

59 teens

★ 600 raffle tickets turned into prizes





FRIENDS OF The Milne Public Library

As I reflect on the past 12 months, it feels like a year of great highs and much to celebrate, and yet it closes with great loss. The passing of Ginny Sheldon leaves all of us bereft. Ginny was the heart and soul of this organization, and the ripple effects of her passing are still visible. I believe that we are all determined to carry the torch for her and not let it lose a single iota of its light. And yet, there is an emptiness still, a feeling that we've lost something central and core.

But even as we struggle with this loss, people are stepping up, ready to do more, wanting to help. On a daily basis, our members are pulling together, collaborating, sharing ideas, committed to figuring out the paths forward so that the Friends will remain a strong and vital force on behalf of our library.

Ginny spread lots of seeds, and those seeds are alive and growing, and they include those people volunteering at the Donation Center, the store, and in other community endeavors. She recruited many, if not most of us over her many years working on behalf of the library. She had a talent and a flair for connecting people and drawing them in. That may be one of the geniuses of Ginny - bringing us together. And while I'm sure she expected to be with us much longer, she did make sure that we were here and ready to sprout and grow. That is no small legacy.

The paradox of 2024 is that it was in many ways also the best year ever for the Friends financially, including membership of over 200 households contributing more than \$24,000 in 2024. Our financial picture is solid:

- Total assets: \$551,665 (+\$12,991)
- Gross revenue: \$165,996 (+\$17,243)
- CTB Gross Revenue: \$103,238 (+\$12,527)
- Total contributions (including WordsAreWonderful): \$102,080 (+\$58,007)



None of this would have been possible without the ongoing dedication of our volunteers. We had a wonderful celebratory event in their honor in November. One of the highlights of that event was the comments by our new library director, Angie Zimmermann. The Friends have enjoyed a great partnership with Angie and many positive things have happened already! In Angie's remarks to the Friends during the Volunteer Appreciation Event, she expressed a heartfelt appreciation of the Friends and the huge impact of our support.

And I want to comment on the marvelous year of 150th Anniversary celebratory events, much to the credit of Judy Ensign and her 150th Celebration Committee. It's clear that this library has played an important role in Williamstown for a century and a half. Our mutual efforts with the library staff, the Trustees, and the town will help insure the next 150 years!

We have a strong board who are enthusiastic and actively engaged. I have come to the end of my 3-year term as president and we welcome Elizabeth Whitney to that role, with Stephen Winkler as our new vice president. Our treasurer Ray Hiley and our secretary Gwen Steege are both continuing. Our board is rounded out by the following members: Pam Art, Jennifer Bayliss, Craig Clemow, Lisa Hiley, Anne Islan, Elizabeth St. Clair, and Michael Sussman.

So now, looking ahead to 2025, I feel very hopeful and positive about our ability to continue to run a beloved bookstore, engage over 70 active volunteers, partner with a gem of a library, and ultimately bring more vitality than ever to our growing library that serves our diverse and wonderful town.

With Appreciation,

Pam Art

President, Friends of Milne Public Library

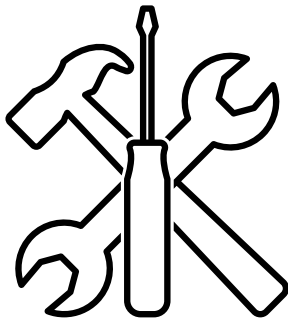


THINGDOM

Our Library of Things

This year, we launched the Thingdom, our Library of Things, in July!

Tools



22

Technology



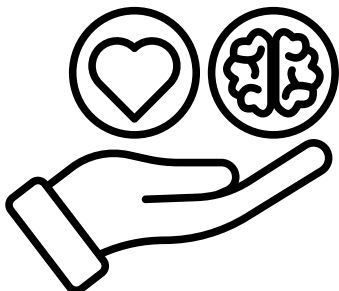
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STEAM Kits



20

Health & Wellness



27

Gardening



16

We currently have 284 items with more to come, especially in the arts and crafts department!

Our most circulated Thingdom item, with **209 circulations** thus far is our Wi-Fi hot spots!

Also, our axe-throwing set was circulated **16 times!**

Kitchenware



44

Miscellaneous



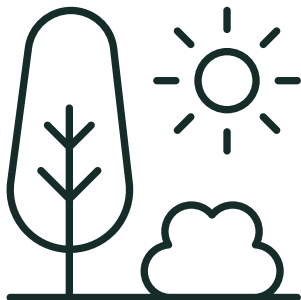
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Arts & Crafts



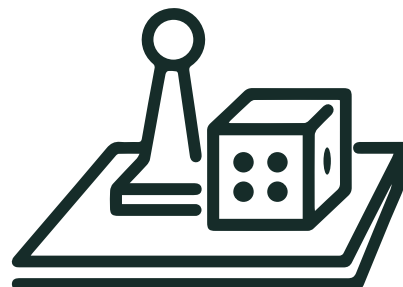
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Outdoor Rec.



65

Board Games & Toys



48

150 Years

During the early months of 1874, a man by the name of Joseph White was using his considerable influence by urging the town's selectmen to found a free public library. White was an honors graduate of Williams college, a lawyer turned judge, who eventually settled permanently in Williamstown.

During the 1850s, he would have been well aware that New England was leading the country in establishing government-funded free public libraries. While local residents had limited access to subscription libraries, the costs to use these were undoubtedly more than most families could afford.

The minutes left to us from the [March 9, 1874 Williamstown town meeting] established that attendees: "Voted, that the town of Williamstown appoint a board of trustees consisting of five persons, two of whom shall be women, to take charge of the town library, to purchase books, to appoint a librarian, to provide rooms . . . [all of these to] be paid by the treasurer of the town from the dog fund."

The taxpayer-supported library unwrapped for residents a world of new information and ideas when it opened in a corner of Cole's General Store on Water Street, a building that is still in use today.



In 1908, with approximately 1,500 cardholders and a rapidly expanding collection of books, the public library was forced into relocation, this time to larger quarters on the ground floor of the Masonic Building on Main Street, just a block away from Cole's.

The location was sufficient for the next 33 years, but by 1941 more room was needed. Fortunately, the library was able to move right next door into the spacious home that had been donated to the town by E. Herbert Botsford in memory of his daughter. He stipulated the library be housed on the ground level and the second-floor be occupied by the Williamstown House of Local History (now known as the

of Stories

Williamstown Historical Museum).

During the 1980s the trustees of the library continued to look at ways of expanding the library facilities. Space became more and more cramped as the collection grew and circulation expanded. During the early 1990's a plan was formulated for the library to move to the former Pine Cobble School building as the private school moved to the High Croft School campus on Gale Road. David and Joyce Milne, owners of The High Croft School, gave the town the former Pine Cobble School as a gift in the exchange.

The David and Joyce Milne Public Library building, the former home of Pine Cobble School, was constructed in 1971 to replace the old school building which burned to the ground in January 1970. The structure was designed by Martin

Lowenfisch. The design of the building's large arching front windows reflect the architect's desire to capture the design themes of the First Congregational Church and Thompson Memorial Chapel located on Main Street.

The building required extensive renovation to transform it from a school to a public library. After three years of construction, the new library was dedicated on November 23, 1996. Construction was finally completed in 1999.

For the past 150 years, Williamstown's small library has been a busy and active community of ideas, whose mission reflects the town's interests and values. It offers a safe and inclusive location for concerts and story times, art exhibitions and lectures, a place to read a newspaper or just sit and think. Patrons can meet other book lovers, play chess, put together a jigsaw puzzle, or join a book club. It is a place for education and entertainment, social connections and personal development.

Patrons find this library a place to work or even apply for work; a place for taking classes or undertaking research; a place for reflective thought. Children can hear someone read a story; teenagers can find a place to dream and let their imaginations run wild. The surroundings are always safe, friendly, and inclusive. Best of all, you're never alone with a book. We've got 150 years of stories, read one. They're addictive. -Judy Ensign



● **150th Anniversary**

⋮ **Open House**
March 9, 2024



● **150th Anniversary**

⋮ **Film Series**
March 7 | March 14 | March 21
March 28 | April 4

● **Williams College Libraries**

⋮ **Display of 1874 Publications**
Month of March

● **Clark Art Institute Library**

⋮ **Display of 1874 Publications**
Months of March and April



40 local artists

Casey Albert
"Butterfly"

Randall Bentley
"Potholes Along the Mohawk"

Joan Dix Blair
"Drone Wood"

Stephanie Boyd
"Orbs"

Deb Burns
"Summer Reading"

Bonita Choly
"Crabapples"

Craig Clemow
"Shep Meadow"

A.F. Cook
"Surrounded (Boy with Tiger Lilies)"

Stephen Danker
"Autumn Light"

Rico Dovey
"Reach for the Sky"

Diana Elvin
"Joy"

Jane Hudson
"Lead"

Wendy James
"Time Passes"

Ellen Joffe-Halpern
"Sheep Hill Fall"

Rik Kent
"The Mount"

Alison Kolesar
"Beside the Green River"

Ann Kremers
"Scarlet Cups"

Robert H. LaFond
"Spring Street in the Spring"

Diane Maero
Untitled

Lisa Mendel
"Iris"

Norma Miller
"Eastern Brown Pelican"

Richard Morgenthal
"Long View"

Susan Regen
"Pathways"

Gwen Steege
"Cherry Tree in March Fog"

Carol Stegeman
"Sycamore Tree in Water"

Sarah Sutro
"Rain, Forming"

CHEERS TO 150 Years

The History of the Williamstown Public Library

April 13, 2024



Public Book Group

Conversation

April 16, 2024

Gallery Tour:

"1874: A Significant Year"

April 27, 2024







● **"The Book Club Play" by
Karen Zacarias**
May 4 & May 5, 2024



● **Thomas E. Johnson, Jr.
Lecture**
May 11, 2024

● **Author Talk: Daughter of
Spies: Wartime Secrets,
Family Lies**
June 26, 2024



Joan Safford Wright
"Sunspot"

Margaret Weinland
"Spencer"

Elizabeth Whateley
"Choppy Waters"

Linda Wagner
"Winter Thistles"

Holly Edwards
"Genesis"

Leslie Morgenthal
Untitled

Helen Olshever
"Porcelain Vase"

Joseph Tracy
"Mountain Rainlight"

Amrita Lash
Stoneware Ceramic Vase

Melanie Mowinski
"The Path to the Roaring Brook"

Jackie Sedlock
"Thank you, Shiro"

825
total 150th celebration
attendees

Thank You!

- The Community of Williamstown
- Milne Patrons
- Milne Staff
- Milne Volunteers
- MountainOne Bank
- The Friends of the Milne Public Library
- Library Board of Trustees
- Logo Designer: David
- Where'd You Get That
- Nature's Closet
- The Purple Pub
- Helene
- Tunnel City Coffee
- Chapter Two Books
- Chapter Two Books Donation Center
- Cupcake Maker: Jeanna
- Clark Art Institute
- Historian: Mike
- The Library Cards
- Janice and Sweetwood
- Photographer: Craig
- The Print Shop
- Images Cinema
- WilliNet
- Open Book Facilitators: Julie & Gene
- Trio Café Budapest
- 150th Speakers, Authors, & Artists
- Art Show Artists
- Art Show Volunteers: Helen, John, Jane, Ann, & Joan
- 150th Planning Committee: Angie, Bridget, Judy, Kira, Kirsten, Lisa, Pam, The Two Pats, and Peter

Author Talk: The Book Keeper: A Memoir of Race, Love, and Legacy

September 19, 2024

Gallery Tour: "1874: A Significant Year"

September 28, 2024

Storytelling in the Berkshires: A Celebration of Fiction Writers who have Visited Williamstown

October 9, 2024

150th Anniversary Art Exhibition

December 2 - 31, 2024



Milne's 2024 TOP FIVE:

Explore Passes Circulated

★ **The Clark Art Institute**

2. Mass MoCA
3. Norman Rockwell Museum
4. Berkshire Museum
5. Hancock Shaker Village



Books Circulated

"North Woods" by Daniel Mason ★

- "The Women" by Kristin Hannah 2.
- "Tom Lake" by Ann Patchett 3.
- "The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride 4.
- "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt 5.

Juvenile Books Circulated

"Dog Man and Cat Kid" by Dav Pilkey ★

- "Sisters" by Raina Telgemeier 2.
- "Dog Man: Brawl of the Wild" by Dav Pilkey 3.
- "InvestiGators: Ants in Our P.A.N.T.S." by John Patrick Green 4.
- "The Baby-sitters Club #6: Kristy's Big Day" by Ann Martin 5.

DVD Circulation

★ **The Holdovers**

- Poor Things
- A Haunting in Venice
- Oppenheimer
- The White Countess



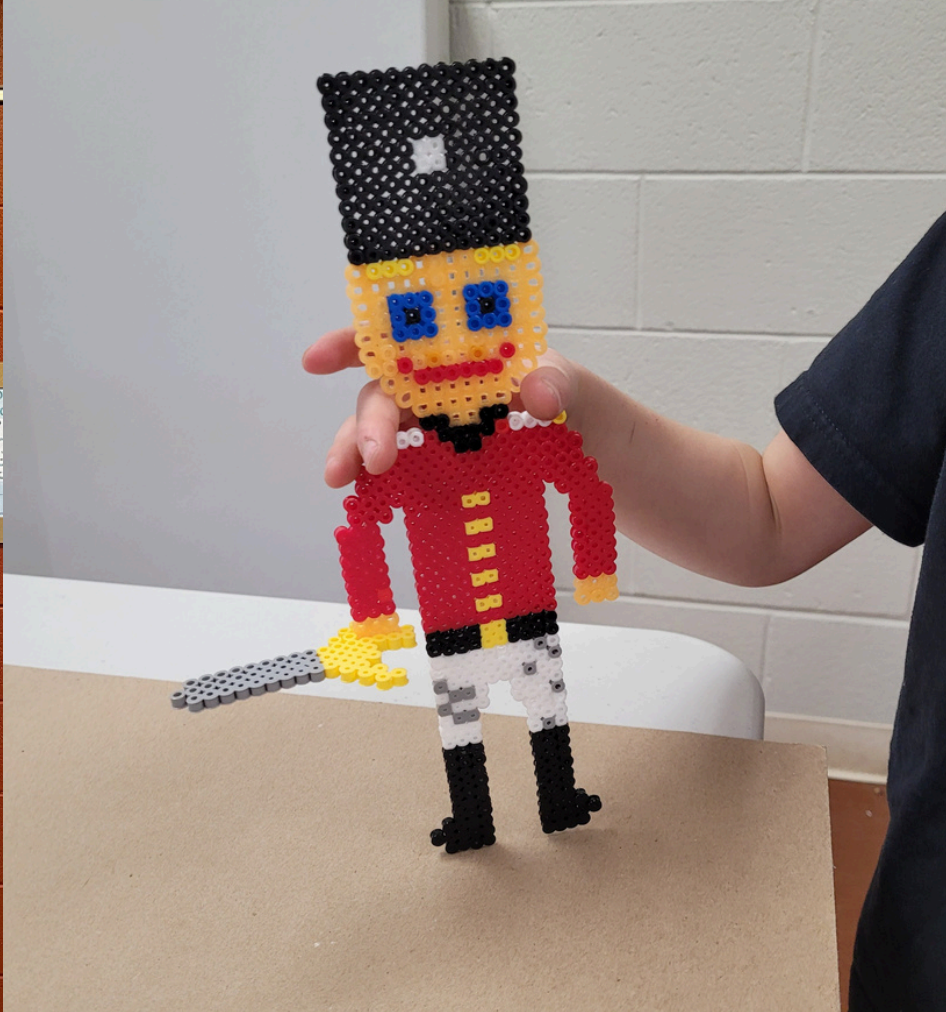
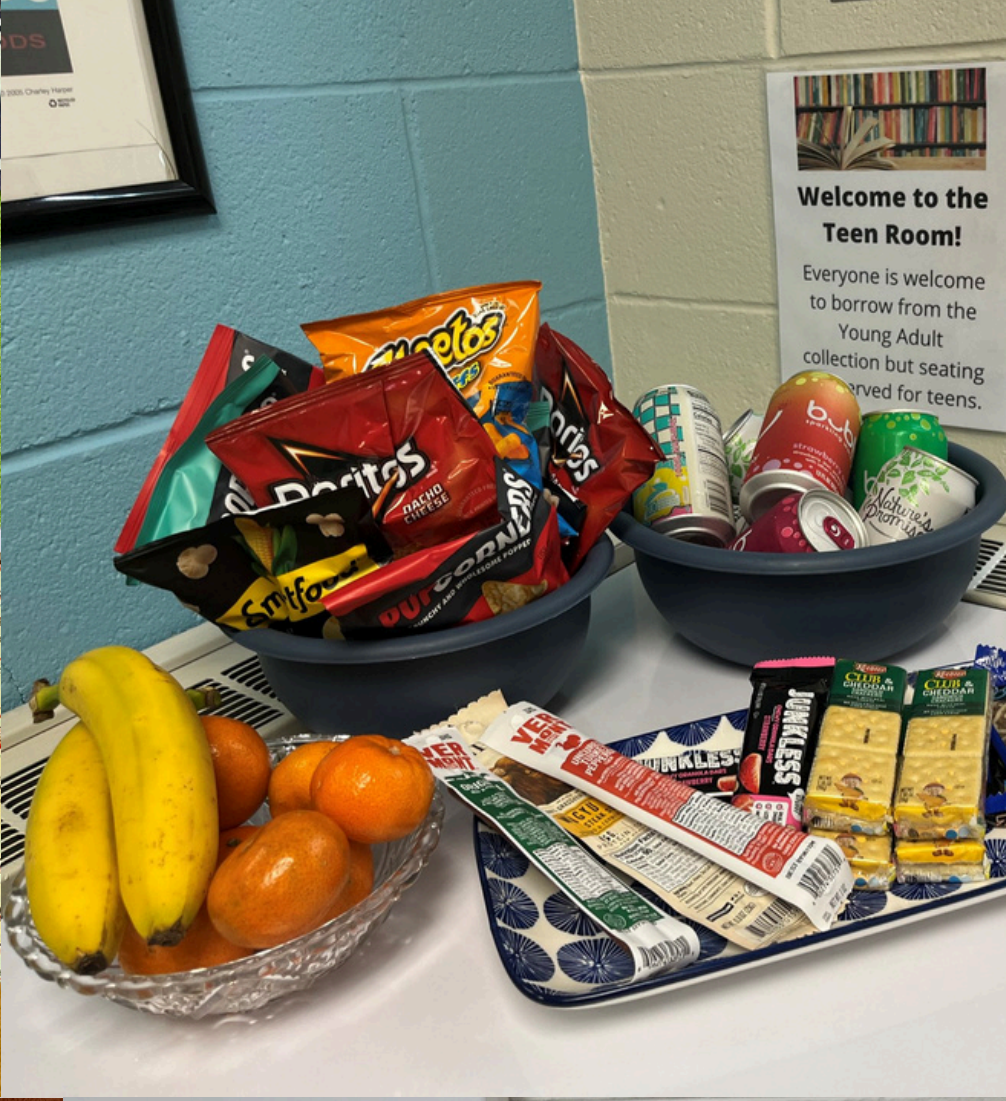
Most Requested Titles

"The Grey Wolf" by Louise Penny ★

- "Time of the Child" by Niall Williams 2.
- "The Waiting" by Michael Connelly 3.
- "The God of the Woods" by Liz Moore 4.
- "Intermezzo" by Sally Rooney 5.







VOLUNTEERS AT Milne Public Library

At the end of 2024, we have 25 volunteers!

We have an amazing group of dedicated, hard-working, and very kind people who contribute enormously to keeping the library running.

Most volunteers shelve, which requires a great deal of knowledge and some physical dexterity to make sure items go in exactly the right spot. Other volunteers process incoming holds which involves unloading items out of bins and onto carts, checking them all into the catalog, and finally placing them in the hold drawers for the benefit of so many of our patrons. We also have a very detail-oriented book mender and several Williamstown Garden Club members who keep our garden beds healthy and beautiful.

On behalf of everyone at the David & Joyce Milne Public Library, thank you to our volunteers for all of your hard work and dedication!

Thank You for 20+ Years from these Volunteers!

Judy Ensign - 27 Years

Judy Madden - 24 Years

Yumi Farwell - 22 Years

Judy Hall - 21 Years

- Kira Williams, Volunteer Coordinator

Our 2024 Interns

Douglas Piñeda Gutierrez: Summer of 2024 and September through December of 2024. He is definitely known for his 1:1 Tech Times but during the summer he also took on coding classes, computer classes, and digital literacy workshops. He will be returning in February 2025

Valen Freitas: With us September through December 2024. Was instrumental in understanding our community's resources, developing the Community Resources Guide, and approaching numerous aspects of the library with an equitable perspective. Conducted research on launching a community social justice program at Milne, played a key role in providing feedback for our DEI committee, researched disability awareness training for the staff, and more. Additionally, Val familiarized themselves with the circulation desk operations and provided support to the staff.

Emery Amico: With us Summer of 2024. Emery supported operations in the Children's Department, assisted with the preparation and execution of summer programs, helped the children's staff, and attended to patrons.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES'

"Looking Forward"

The Board of the Milne Library thanks the entire community for a successful and exciting 2024.

While you already know of our most visible accomplishments - the hiring of a new director, the establishment of the library of things, and the addition of new library programming, you may not be as familiar with all the work that goes on behind the scenes - the more mundane work of updating library policies and strengthening our work with library staff and Friends.

2025 will bring a host of new activities and directions, which we are excited to share. We have already begun the establishment of a building advisory committee to look forward into the future of the library, as our current building ages. This may mean extensive renovations or possibly the relocation of the library to a brand new construction. We are actively seeking feedback from the community as well as members of the community who can devote time and expertise to the planning and recommendations needed to make these complex decisions.

We are also working to strengthen our collaborations with other community organizations and to promote the use of the library spaces for a larger variety of events. The board will continue to work to expand the reach of the library to traditionally underserved groups, this year especially reaching out to English language learners and neurodiverse children and families. The board also looks forward to more advocacy for the library, within our town and across the state.

We are all incredibly excited for the new year and thank you all for making ours the best library it can be!

Micah Manary
Board Chair

