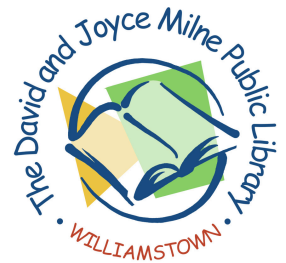


Date: September 11th, 2024

To: David & Joyce Milne Public Library Board of Trustees

Prepared by: Angela Zimmermann, Library Director



Administrative and Staff Reports for September 11th Board Meeting

Library Director, Angela Zimmermann

August was a quieter month for the library, as reflected in some of the reports below. This slowdown I've learned is quite typical in August, given that people are wrapping up their summer vacations and preparing for the new school year.

Personnel

With hours available from various personnel changes, I am able to hire a part-time children's services specialist. This person will also be cross-trained to assist at the main circulation desk.

In the coming week, I plan to post the Digital Resources Librarian position. Over the past week, we've redistributed a few of this position's responsibilities among various staff, and I'm considering reimagining this role as a full-time Marketing position instead.

I've nearly finished all of the 1:1 goal-setting meetings with the staff. Additionally, I've decided to align the staff performance evaluation process with the evaluation timeline that the Board will be using for me.

As a reminder, we'll be having our staff in-service training day on Friday, October 4th and the library will be closed the whole day. Among some of the day's events: there will be a LGBTQIA+ cultural awareness training and crisis intervention/de-escalation training.

Building & Grounds

I've spent a fair amount of time over the past month - though, honestly, it's been an ongoing task - monitoring building and grounds maintenance and cleanliness of the building. Just to provide you with a quick update on various B&G projects:

- Replacement of the front bathroom roof: Vermont Roofing is scheduled to begin work at the end of November.
- We are waiting yet on various quotes for the windows and doors and we should (fingers-crossed) have three quotes to compare at the next Building & Grounds committee meeting in October. A fair amount of contractors have turned down the project.
- As per the Centerline report and as advised by DPW, we're installing a few magnetic locks throughout the building. This project should be completed in the next couple of weeks.
- A final walk around and post-inspection for the heat pumps is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th. We have a few additional questions about how the

system operates, including controls and nighttime settings. This inspection will be valuable since most of the staff wasn't directly involved in the project.

- The front water spigot has been installed for the garden areas. In theory, what should have been the simplest of all these projects listed, did result in a bit of flooding. All is better now!
- I've decided to proceed with replacing the floor in the AV area, as the cost came in under \$10k. After consulting with the Finance Director and the Accounting Clerk, we concluded that this expense should be considered a capital improvement, in line with the approval of the warrants at the Town meeting. Initially, I informed the B&G committee that I was postponing action on this until we had the costs for the windows and doors. However, I've since realized that the expense of replacing the floor isn't substantial enough to warrant delaying the entire project.

Various Projects

We have a new events calendar on our website and a new meeting room reservation tool. The events calendar is far more user-friendly and intuitive allowing patrons to filter by age group and program type to find events that may interest them. The meeting room reservation tool enables patrons to book a room for their preferred days and times. They can also select the layout, request specific equipment, and provide room setup instructions. Kudos to all of the staff involved in this project for their diligent and swift efforts in mastering this new tool, allowing us to get it up and running efficiently!

I am currently working on the Financial Report and State Aid compliance form, which is due October 4th. I will need Trustee Chair Micah to sign this document once ready but I'll also be sure to bring this to the October Board meeting so all of the trustees can see this information. I will also have the Finance Director review the work done prior to submission.

We're nearing the final stages of our new logo. We were determined that it would not be an open book, since that's a common logo for libraries. Instead, we really wanted it to convey a sense of community focus in a different way. Jack has worked closely with Sophie Gerry, who we've commissioned for the project and who has displayed her work here at the library, to convey our thoughts and we will be showing the staff our current progress at our staff meeting on Friday.

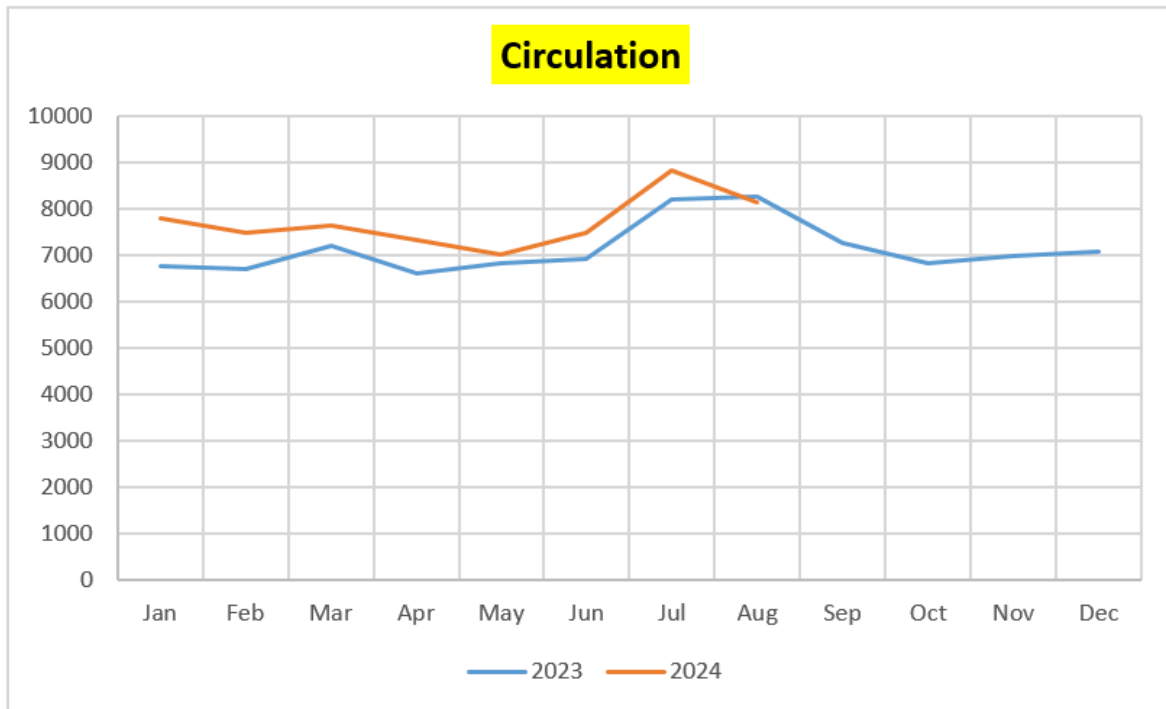
I've met with Kerri Nicholl, a Professor of Social Work at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, twice to discuss a student who is curious, yet uncertain, about whether to pursue library science or social work. We collaborated to develop a potential internship opportunity for them here at the Milne Library and they will be joining our team as a Community Resources Services Intern in the coming weeks.

There will be a MakerSpace committee convening on the morning of September 26th. The committee will include Friends' members (Pam Art, Trevor Babb, Gwen Steege, and Elizabeth Whitney), staff (Kirsten Rose, Sam White, and myself), and the MakerSpace Program Manager

(David Keiser-Clark) as well as the Instrumentation Engineer (Jason Mativi) from Williams College. If any trustees are interested, please let me know!

I'd also like to acknowledge the entire staff for their incredible dedication, flexibility, and hard work. There has been significant change and adjustment in a short amount of time and they've navigated these transitions together with a sense of unity and forward momentum!

Milne By the Numbers



	July	August
New Library Card Registrations	35	54
Monthly Door Count	8125	7899
Comics Plus checkouts	17	34
Creativebug (sessions)	4	4
Hoopla checkouts	144	190
Kanopy checkouts	192	154
Libby checkouts	2083	2117

Mango Language total sessions	45	51
Meeting room usage total	84	68
Newsletter total subscribers	2569	2549
Newsletter unique opens	5151	6620
New York Times (access began in July and tracking sessions)	19	We were not yet provided August #s as of September 9th
Website unique visitors	1629	1743
Website site sessions	3026	3229

Assistant Director, Kirsten Rose

Much of August was taken up with completely revamping the entire work schedule for our expanded hours starting in September, including talking to nearly everyone on staff to figure out their interest and availability, and trying to fit those needs into the available time slots.

Other tasks:

- Running reports for weeding and cleaning up the catalog - my goal is always to find items that are out-of-place or in the wrong status, etc.
- Continuing to weed MYSTERY
- Doing more cataloging now, including audiobooks, large print and books from the Baker & Taylor lease program
- Testing out the new meeting room reservations tool and how that will operate with our new calendar system

Circulation Manager, Jenna English

Not a whole lot going on this month.

- We are sad to see our student workers return to school. Their help at the desk during the summer was greatly appreciated by all!
- Weeding: DVDs have been weeded & work continues on the fiction collection.
- Debbie M & Ella have put together an excellent display of the top films from the last 100 years. It's very exciting to have that whole wall space for DVD displays!
- Patrons have been utilizing & enjoying the coffee station. Unfortunately I did find a coffee cup left on the floor of the nonfiction room while closing, so we'll need to make sure we keep an eye out for cups & other debris not being disposed of in the appropriate fashion.

- Thingdom items are circulating well. Saturday seems to be the most popular checkout day for these items currently. Games indoor & outdoor continue to be the most popular items. I suspect that will change soon as the weather gets colder. Thus far I've been managing to stay on top of checking in Thingdom items. We'll see if that changes in the future.

*From the Adult Services Department:
Adult Services Librarian, Kira Williams*

While there were fewer programs than usual in August, which is often a slow month for adult events, we did see some attendance to what was happening. Most notably, Book Bingo ended and 28 people participated this year, which is 5 more than participated last year. Many had done so in previous years but there were also a few new 'players'. They all received a \$5 Chapter Two Books gift card and the chance to win either a gift basket item or one \$50 Bookshop.org gift card. I will soon post a blog about the results in general and some interesting details from the stack of bingo cards. (We also had decent staff book bingo participation!)

While only one person logged into the age 50 and up jobseekers series, I am optimistic that they benefited from the session and will consider returning for the rest of them which go until mid-December. Because we are taking part through a library collaboration, attendees have the chance to 'meet' people all over the state who are also seeking jobs and get advice from a professional job coach.

The Berkshire Gamers have had some enthusiastic game players attend, both adults and teens, but in order to attract more adults and to accommodate younger people as they head back to school, the time has been pushed back to 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm once a month.

I also spent a great deal of time in August getting ready for and listing programs in September, when the adult schedule is quite a bit more robust. This is partly due to the additional weeknight hours, but there is also typically more going on in September each year.

Like other planners and programmers on staff, I also spent quite a bit of time learning how to use and entering events into "Library Calendar" to prepare for putting events on the schedule moving forward.

I also facilitated a Massachusetts Library Association virtual meeting about adult programming, focusing this time on concerts and other musical programming for adults. It's an awesome group to be a part of since so much information and so many ideas are shared there by public librarians statewide.

And finally, Rocio and I attended the Farmers' Market on August 24th where we interacted with 54 adults, teens and kids. We handed out a lot of information about the library in general, typically after folks were lured in by the colorful prize wheel, so we shared a lot of library 'merch' as well! We were also very happy to have the chance to speak to several Spanish-speakers at the market.

Adult Program Attendance Numbers:

Program	# of attendees
Dementia-friendly Caregivers Support Group	3
50+ Jobseekers virtual series	1 (from Williamstown)
Berkshire Gamers	2 adults, 8 teens
Friday Films: <i>Past Lives</i>	1
Adult Book Bingo (Adult Summer Reading Program)	28 (over 70 cards taken/printed)
Staff Book Bingo	5 staff members - not in total
Farmers' Market Outreach Table	54

Digital Resources Librarian, Jack Sarr

The Thingdom

Adding items to the Thingdom has been my #1 priority over the past month. I'm still largely focusing on getting the outdoor recreation items added while the good weather lasts, though we also saw some additions to board games, as well as technology such as the projector and giant inflatable screen. I am currently cooperating with Jenna, who will be producing the printed and laminated Thingdom cards for the gardening items, allowing me to expedite the cataloguing of that collection.

Website

Using the photos that our summer intern Douglas provided, I put together a staff photos page on our website. This includes all members of staff, their job titles, and professional email addresses where relevant. We've received many messages of gratitude for this update via email, showing that our patrons are enthusiastic about getting to know our members of staff better.

www.milnelibrary.org/staff

I also added an Employment page to the website, which currently contains information on the Children's Library Specialist position. milnelibrary.org/employment

Brochure

I updated the library's brochure to include information on the Thingdom, a selection of online resources, and our new opening hours. I will also be working with others on staff to update the Spanish brochure.

*From the Children's Department:
Children's Librarian, Debbie Baker*

August brought the end of our Summer Reading program, which was well attended and much appreciated by parents and kids alike. We had a total of 150 kids sign up, and 78 of those turned in their reading logs for raffle tickets before the drawing. Combined with the tickets received from program attendance, 1065 tickets were put in 25 boxes in hopes of winning one (or more) of our 35 prizes. We tried a new thing this year and did a live raffle drawing, which unfortunately didn't bring much luck to the attendees - only three prize-winners were present. Maybe next year!

A couple of stand-out events in August attracted families who worked together. Jay Mankita runs Playful Engineers, and he brought about 20 bins of different types of components for us to experiment with. He explained what a Rube Goldberg machine is, and showed us how chain reactions can be built one step at a time. It was amazing to watch and a lot of fun. And Teen Librarian Rocio led a "Wee Homes" session of Create Camp, where some really cozy dwellings were created for some really tiny creatures. (You can still see a few of them in the Children's Room; come in and check them out!)

As always, we couldn't do any of this without the funding from our wonderful Friends group and the help of our equally wonderful volunteers. We really appreciate all of them!

Onward to September!



Teen Librarian, Rocio Carrera

August was one of our busiest months in the Children's and Teen space, I apologize for all of the numbers that I am about to throw your way!

Throughout August I had a total of 60 babies and pre-schoolers in our Monday storytime. 40 books were added to the Teen Room collection. Our August display was "Y.A. Faves on Booktok".

We participated in two Milne Library Out & About events, National Night Out at the Spruces and the Williamstown Farmers Market. At the National Night Out event we had take-away kits for children, a craft kit to create a 3-D paper owl. 30 kits were handed out that night. We interacted with many Williamstown and North Adams community members (59 adults; 16 teens; and 52 kids) several which had not visited the library and did not know that all of our library programming is free (thank you Friends of the Milne Library). At the Williamstown Farmers Market (57 adults, 7 teens, 19 kids) Kira and I spoke to not only library regulars but also folks who were dropping off their children at Williams College (yes, your child can get a free public library card!), new staff members at Williams College (signed them up for their new cards on the spot and gave them a "kit" of pertinent library info), and folks from Florida who own a second home here in town (they were excited to hear that they also qualified for library cards with us).

Our Teen Movies at the Milne was the 1980's Spielberg classic, E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial (7 teens in attendance), snacks provided and I was happy to hear from the teens that the movie was as exciting as I remember it from my youth.

We had 18 teens attend our World Taste Challenge...If you dare! program. I procured 12 types of internationally available chips, flavors such as Grilled Squid, Roasted Lamb Skewer, Spicy Fried Chicken and Triple Cheese (Gouda & Camembert!) and Italian Red meat among others. We also had a selection of sweets, Kit Kat flavors from Japan like Milk Tea, Wasabi and Whole Grain (surprisingly the most popular with this group of teens). The teens did a blind taste test, guess the flavor and rated it on a smily face scale. There were some thoughtful and hilarious comments on their rating sheet. "A little better than cucumber but still bad"; "No comment=rejection"; "Interesting"; "No thank you GARLIC". Everyone bravely tried all of the flavors and happily took home Japanese gummies and Pocky's and bags of chips.

We had 9 tweens & teens participate in Teens Create: Embroidery. The teens learned basic embroidery stitches and used templates to begin a simple embroidery project. They took a kit with them that included all the items they needed to finish their project at home.

Our August Create Camp was Wee Homes. 16 kids, 8 teens, 12 adults. Create Camps emphasize the process rather than the outcome but still, some incredible landscapes were made to house our collection of plastic animals. Several of the teens that participated donated their Wee Homes and they are now displayed in the Children's Room available for our younger patrons to enjoy a moment of play.



A last note is that Summer Reading ended in the last week of August!!! Over 600 raffle tickets were turned in this year which is a great amount. 59 teens signed up (everyone received a teen summer reading shirt) at the beginning of summer with 34 logs being returned by the end, an increase over the previous two years. Again, thanks to Friends of the Milne Library, we had an abundance of incredible prizes including Bluetooth wireless earbuds and gift cards to popular local businesses. Those that did not win a larger prize were able to select from a basket of additional prizes and everyone left quite happy.



Children and Teen Program Attendance Numbers:

Program	# of kids	# of teens	# of families	# of programs
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Storytimes	88			8
Passive (I-Spy)	66			3
Playful Engineers Chain Reaction	20	5	4	1
National Night Out passive (owls)	30			1
National Night Out (outreach)	52	16	59	1
Movie - LEGO 2 Movie	3	7	3	1
Crafternoon - Suncatchers	13	3	1	1
World Food Challenge		18		1
Movie - ET		7		1
Create Camp - Wee Homes	16	8	12	1
LEGO Challenge	3	2		1
Prize Drawing	11			1
Movie - Detective Pikachu	5		3	1
Teens Create - Embroidery		9		1
Farmers Market (outreach)	19	7	57	1
Total attendance = 547	326	82	139	24