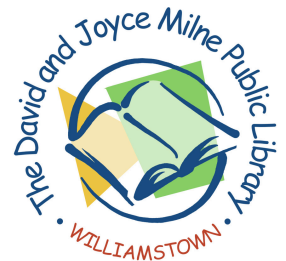


Date: August 14th, 2024
To: David & Joyce Milne Public Library Board of Trustees
Prepared by: Angela Zimmermann, Library Director



Administrative and Staff Reports for August 14th Board Meeting

Library Director, Angela Zimmermann

In July, the library saw heightened activity and an uptick in numbers across most areas, which is especially notable given that we had to close for two days due to power outages. Below, you'll also find updated statistics that now include meeting room usage, following a trustee's suggestion to incorporate this aspect of library use. Additionally, Youth Services remained exceptionally busy with the summer reading program (you'll receive the full details/statistics on this at the next board meeting). And finally, the entire staff has also done a commendable job supporting each other amidst summer vacations and scheduling adjustments.

We also said goodbye to our two summer interns, who will be greatly missed. Emery spent the entire summer in the children's department and enjoyed the experience so much that they may be interested in returning for another internship. Douglas, who focused on various tech aspects, made significant contributions, including the highly successful Tech Times sessions as well as a weeklong coding camp led by both Douglas and Ella from the library. I plan to have interns at the library year-round, through collaborating with local colleges and high schools (hopefully making the Tech Times a permanent program).

At our July staff meeting, we had a representative (Bob Dean) from Berkshire Harm Reduction visit us to provide us with Narcan training. The presentation was engaging and staff were grateful for the opportunity to hear from him. Since then, it's also been arranged that he will be returning to provide Narcan training for the public in September. A Narcan box has also been installed within the library and is accessible to the public (restocked free of charge through Berkshire Harm Reduction). At our August staff meeting, we will be doing a review of our opening and closing procedures, particularly considering the shuffling around of schedules to accommodate the new hours in September. **Friendly reminder that beginning September 3rd, we are now open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays until 8:00 pm.

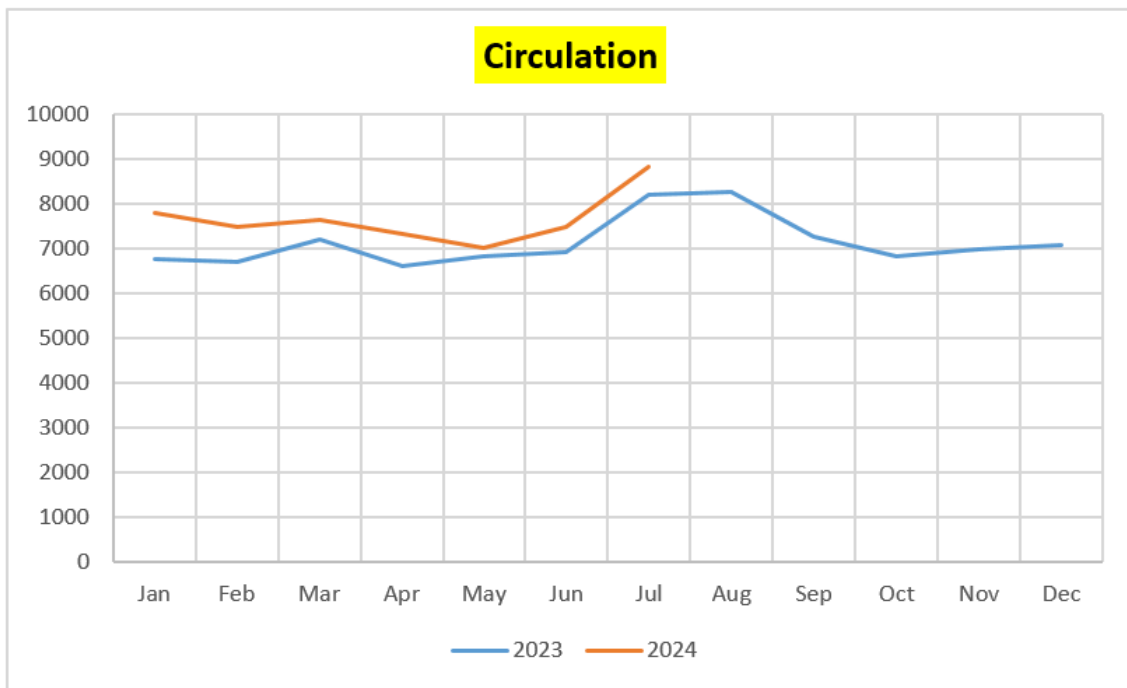
Remedy Hall's two satellite locations are up and running within the library. Located within the alcove near the front door and within the teen area, items are accessible to those in need. We're already seeing use in both of these areas.

In addition to the ESOL classes taking place on Wednesdays at the library, we also now serve as a satellite location to the Literacy Volunteers of Berkshire County. They will house supplies here at the library and tutors will meet with their students at the library.

Other administrative things which have taken my time in the past weeks include preparing the state annual report - I still have a few questions to resolve, but once that's done, I'll send it to the trustees hopefully before the board meeting. Additionally, I've been getting ready to meet with each staff member to discuss goal setting and expectations, which will ultimately contribute to their performance evaluations.

Furthermore, we've purchased a new calendar/event software which will integrate with our new website, and will be far more intuitive and user-friendly [than our current events calendar](#). The new calendar will offer more versatility and allow patrons to filter via age groups, program types, everything will be color-coded - essentially providing an intuitive interface for finding and registering for the events that interest them. The new tool will also allow patrons to reserve meeting rooms for their usage (one of the action items of the strategic plan). We hope this will be ready to go by the beginning to mid of September.

Milne By the Numbers in May



	June	July
New Library Card Registrations	44	35
Monthly Door Count	6535	8125
Comics Plus checkouts*	-	17

Creativebug (sessions)	2	4
Hoopla checkouts	102	144
Kanopy checkouts	212	192
Libby checkouts	1978	2083
Mango Language total sessions	38	45
Meeting room usage total* (Will have this graphically better represented for the September report and divided out between various usages of the rooms)	72	84
Newsletter total subscribers	2600	2569
Newsletter unique opens	5233	5151
New York Times* (access began in July and tracking sessions)	-	19
Website unique visitors	1670	1629
Website site sessions	3129	3026

**new stats*

Assistant Director, Kirsten Rose

ALA was great! I attended a number of really interesting and thought-provoking sessions, and have already applied some of what I learned there, particularly new ways of looking at data.

The 4th of July parade was a lot of fun and we had probably twice as many people walking with us in the parade as in past years. It was terrific having staff, Trustees and Friends all walking together, and I felt like we got a really positive response.

July brings the end of the fiscal year, and there are always a handful of accounting tasks to take care of in relation to that.

I have been working a lot on scheduling issues - summer always means that staff want to go on vacation, and so there are substitutes to schedule and plan for. We also had interns and some summer student workers to accommodate. I have been very busy planning for a new version of the regular schedule for our expanded hours in the fall. There are a number of different pieces

to fit together, and Angie and I tried to put something together that will fit everyone's needs. This is still an ongoing project.

I have been cataloging audiobooks and lease books. I also took on re-cataloging some mislabeled items, for example a number of audiobooks, i.e. putting all the ghostwritten Tom Clancy books under Clancy, etc.

There have been a number of unusual items to order as well, like additional cables for hanging artwork, and so forth. I have been trying to find new furniture for the staff room, but am not happy with anything I've found so far.

Circulation Manager, Jenna English

I attended a webinar on setting boundaries with patrons. Not a whole lot that was new to me, but I did appreciate the discussion on the importance of self-care as a necessary way to reduce stress & anxiety after difficult patron interactions. I'd planned to do another one on dealing with stress, but it was on the day the library had the all-day power outage & I didn't have the Zoom link.

Weeding: Debbie M & Ella are currently working on weeding the DVDs.

The Thingdom has been received well by patrons thus far. As expected, the Outdoor Recreation items are going out.

The Experience Passes brochure is nearing completion. I'm working on a few tweaks to it right now.

I've been working on creating Thingdom cards. Gardening & Tools are now complete.

Patrons have been really enjoying the New York Times Best Books of the 21st Century display. Many of the books have gone out!

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

In terms of programming, there was certainly variety: a talk, a movie, a concert, yoga classes and an art workshop in addition to the ongoing, monthly meetings.

Amy Musante, a biologist and beekeeper, gave a talk about bees' importance as pollinators for the Williamstown Garden Club, who generously opened it to the public. Mary Edgerton provided two more Gentle Yoga classes as well, and we expect her to continue in the Fall. I showed the new film, *Arthur the King* with Mark Wahlberg, and learned (again) that a beautiful day in July does not entice many people to come to movies! Beautiful days are more suitable for outdoor acoustic concerts, which we hosted on a Saturday. Hungrytown played before a good-sized audience under the trees in front of the library. And on the last day of July, people of

all ages collected their kits before virtually attending the Night Sky Painting Workshop with Pop-Up Art School, which everyone seemed to enjoy.

I attended the Pioneer Valley Library Collaborative Meeting, which is a group of mostly librarians in the Pioneer Valley who came together a few years ago to find ways to share ideas and create joint programs about climate issues, primarily during Climate Prep Week in September. There are quite a few ideas still being considered, but many libraries will contribute funding towards a virtual book talk in September by Tom Wessels, biologist and author of *New England's Roadside Ecology*, in addition to many other titles.

Rocio and I had the opportunity to speak to several new library users in Spanish. One Spanish-speaking family just moved to the area several weeks ago, signed up for a library card and checked out quite a few books. They also seemed interested in ESOL courses in the area, ESOL books and in our books in Spanish.

A number of staff members also settled on new calendar and scheduling software after meeting with four vendors. We selected Library Calendar, and got started on learning how it works before integrating it with our website. I am excited to use a more library-friendly scheduling and registration system, especially for programs that require registration.

Also, all of the staff on the collection development committee met and had a productive meeting which should help us to move forward with everything from displays to weeding.

Adult Program Attendance Numbers:

Program	# of attendees
Pollinators talk by Amy Musante, at Williamstown Garden Club monthly meeting	27
Friday Film: Arthur the King	1
Gentle Yoga with Mary Edgerton, 2 sessions	22
Acoustic Concert: Hungrytown	25
Pop-Up Art School Painting Workshop: Night Sky	22
Dementia-Friendly Caregivers Support Group	2
Berkshire Gamers	3
Tech Times	19 individual sessions

Digital Resources Librarian, Jack Sarr

Digital Resources

At the beginning of July, we added online access to the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal to our selection of digital resources. These can be accessed through our website, offering patrons access passes that last for 24 hours for the New York Times, and 72 hours for the Wall Street Journal. These can be renewed via the same links on the website as many times as the user likes.

Following this, in mid-July, we added Comics Plus to our online resources. This includes the Comics Plus children's collection and teen collection, both of which can be accessed with a library card. Like Hoopla, the comics, graphic novels and manga available on this service are available immediately and without holds. Unlike Hoopla, there is no limit to the number of titles a user can borrow per month.

We also saw changes to our remote printing options in the library, courtesy of changes made by CW MARS. Patrons can now visit print.princh.com with our printer ID 109294 to print from their own devices. Alternatively, users can forward an email to ewimain.bw@ewprints.com to print directly from email. This greatly streamlines the process for printing emails or email attachments.

The Thingdom

Cataloging items for the Thingdom continues to be my main focus. The current priority are the outdoor recreation items, including camping gear, outdoor cooking equipment, lawn games, and still more to come. As well as these, I moved all of our pre-existing board game collection from the children's room, into the Thingdom collection (with help from Debbie Baker!). These board games are now browsable via the Thingdom cards at the front of the library, and will now be exposed to more patrons.

Amongst the Stacks

I returned to the Fantasy and Science Fiction shelves for a very thorough weeding of older titles. The criteria for which books would be weeded was stricter than usual, due to limited shelving and the volume of incoming titles, but this has resulted in space for lots of face-out display on the shelves themselves.

I also put together a display of memoirs and biographies from the adult graphic novel collection, which is currently situated at our new display space where the old atlas stand used to be.

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

Our Summer Reading Program is in full swing, with the theme of "Read, Renew, Repeat." My goal was to use up some of the supplies we have on hand to make our craft projects and so far it's been pretty easy. Our craft cabinet is pretty stuffed!

Overall this July we held 27 programs for kids and teens, with over 400 participants. By far the best attended was Ed the Wizard's Balloon Twisting workshop, where around 40 kids, teens, and grownups learned how to make a small menagerie of balloon animals for their very own.

Also very popular were the LEGO Challenges, where participants tried to complete each prompt before the time was up (and were mostly successful).

Looking forward to what August brings us!

Teen Librarian, Rocio Carrera

Thanks to Remedy Hall, we now have satellite locations in our library including the Teen Room! I have noticed items finding are going out and am happy to encourage the teen community to help themselves. I also had a great conversation with one of our Latino families about the items on the shelves and was able to give them directions to Remedy Hall itself so they could look into kitchenware and clothing for their upcoming move to Williamstown (they are currently in North Adams).

Had a couple of tweens yesterday that were intrigued by the games in the Thingdom and I walked them through the process of checking the Giant Jenga out so they could play in-house.

We added 33 items into our YA collection in July.

We have two ongoing displays in the Teen Room throughout summer. The first is the Mt. Greylock Summer Reading List. In the spring, Liza Barrett (the librarian at MGRS) sends me the most current required reading lists for MGRS, this gives me time to access the quality of our collection and purchase any that might be needed (last year we had a great demand for the book *Circe* so I added two new copies to our permanent YA collection). The display includes books out of storage and a selection of dystopian novels (the Honors English 12 requirement).

The second ongoing display is Massachusetts Teen Choice Book Award. This selection of books are also a bonus raffle ticket on our summer reading log so I am happy to see that they are going out quite a bit! Voting for teens is in September.

We had quite a bit on offer for our tweens and teens this July including a teen movie, *Ghostbusters: Afterlife*, *Teens Create: Sunprints* (I also offered this event to our staff!), a week long Coding Camp (thanks so much Douglas and Ella), Berkshire Gamers Gaming Night, and two family art drop-in Create Camps, which each had over 30 patrons participating, kids, adults and teens! Below are a few photos from our events.

Create Camp: Watercolor and Chalk



Teens Create: Sunprints



Create Camp: Paper Mache



Children and Teen Program Attendance Numbers:

Program	# of kids	# of teens	# of families	# of programs
Storytimes	105			9
Passive (I-Spy)	74			4
LEGO Challenges	22	3		2
Movies (kids)			30	2
Crafternoon	29			2
Teens Create - Sun Prints		6		1
Create Camp		4	63	2
Ed the Wizard - balloon twisting		5	35	1
Coding Camp		26		3
Movie (teens)		5		1
	230	49	128	27
Total attendance = 407				

Building & Grounds Supervisor, Alex Charron

In July and outside of regular daily duties, I either assisted, completed or initiated the following projects:

The tree trimming along the southern property line was completed and fence installation went extremely well. and will be asking the cemetery to drop top soil along the fence to fix the grade variations along the distance of the fence.

The pavilion was installed along with the walkway and is handicap accessible and now available for programs.

The new sign was installed at the beginning of the month.

I've received answers from numerous contractors regarding the door and trapezoid windows. Ames builders, Albert Cummings have both come to take measurements and should be sending their quote soon. I am waiting on calls back from Broadwell Carpentry, Haskins Construction, Berkshire Plate Glass, CL White and Kapiloff Glass. and Geary Builders. All of this information will be brought forward at the next Building & Grounds Committee meeting.

We also have received quotes for the painting of the exterior of the building.

Reynolds Plumbing will be here on the 9th to plan the installation of the water spigot in the front.

We are still waiting on the DPW for the remainder of the tree removal in the front yard.