

## Library Highlight: Board Game Collection Expansion



Thanks to the hard work of Technical Services, Innovation & Communications, and the Custodial departments, the Library is excited to announce an expanded (and still expanding!) board game collection with options for gamers of all ages and experience levels. New labels featuring the number of players, recommended ages, and complexity rating for each game make finding the right fit for patrons easier than ever before! It is located on the second floor of the Main Library, next to the DVDs and adult graphic novels. This collection also extends to Fowler, which is adding a second display cube!

## Reference Services

- Reference answered 303 reference questions, booked 270 meeting rooms, assisted 117 patrons with technology, and advised 5 patrons on reading choices. 7 patrons used the Library's notary service.
- Michelle created a display in the Rotunda about eating locally. The display featured cookbooks from some of the local farms. Meanwhile, Kare created a display entitled "Getting There", which included travel memoirs and other travel-related books.
- The department hosted a number of exciting programs in November including a writing workshop with author Dora Farkas, a virtual genealogy workshop on finding attendee's English ancestors, and a walk for wellbeing with Lara Wilson. The Tuesday Book Discussion group read and discussed *Dear Life*, by Alice Munro, while the Cookbook Club enjoyed Native American recipes at their monthly gathering.

## Youth Services

### Teen Lounge

- Teen ran 8 programs in November with a total attendance of 139 teen and adult attendees.
- The Magic the Gathering draft program continued to prove the popularity of card game culture here at the Library. The program brings teens of a broad spectrum of ages together!
- On Saturday, November 16, a joint program between Concord Free Public Library and Concord-Carlisle High School welcomed 13 authors of Young Adult books to meet their fans. The Young Adult Author Symposium (YAAS!) began with the authors welcoming attendees and talking about their work together before breaking into smaller panels including writing genre fiction, researching for writing, and the publishing process. A local book retailer selling the authors' works led a mass book signing and some 1-on-1 time with fans and authors. The Teen Librarian and the high school staff hope to see this event become an annual celebration, perhaps as a part of the Concord Festival of Authors.

- The Teen Librarian coordinated with the Middlesex School to host rotating groups of upperclassmen student volunteers. These groups began in mid-November and continue to visit bi-weekly or monthly. Larger groups are planned for the future to help the Youth Services shelving run smoothly.



## Children's Library

- The Children's Library kicked off November with a very special Alphabet Storytime featuring special guests Officer Olansky and Mental Health Clinician Emily Black from the Concord Police Department.
- Children's staff teamed up with Concord Recreation AfterSchool to invite children to color laser cut dragon egg ornaments for the Library's tree featured in the Concord Museum's Family Trees exhibit. This year, Children's staff designed their tree based on the Caldecott honor picture book *The Truth About Dragons*, by Julie Leung. The 3D printed dragons and laser cut eggs were crafted using tools from the Workshop and finished at Make-it! Club.
- Make-it! Club also featured a visit from the CCHS Sunshine Club in November. Sunshine Club volunteers taught attendees how to make shrink plastic art from #6 plastic, which is unable to be recycled through conventional means.
- Toward the end of November, the Library enjoyed a raucously fun visit from Susie Maguire and the Poop Museum. Kids who attended learned tons of facts about poop (including that snails can poop in rainbow colors and that pandas can poop up to 50 times per day), took home samples of elephant poop paper, and became "certified" members of The Poo Crew! This program was so well-received that staff invited Susie to return for her Poop Museum Part 2 program during the summer 2025 season.
- Youth Services staff also partnered with Concord-Carlisle Regional SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) to host naturopath Dr. Maura Scanlon, who presented "Plate to Mind: Food and its Effect on Mood and Brain Chemistry," the first event in the lecture series *Transforming Childhood Expertise, Innovation, and Community Development* for caregivers, educators, and others working with youth in Concord and the surrounding community.





## Circulation

- Passes for the Museum of Fine Arts and the New England Aquarium were the most popular passes in November. They circulated 26 times each - an increase of 10 more uses per pass compared to October. The circulation total for November was 25,852 items.
- The highest circulated fiction book in November was *Sandwich*, by Catherine Newman. The non-fiction title with the most circulation was *An Unfinished Love Story*, by Doris Kearns Goodwin.
- The corridor displays for November were “Know-vember” - non-fiction titles and fun facts and “Family Drama”, which featured fictional stories about families. Thank you to Helen and Stacey for creating the displays.
- Members of the Circulation Team worked with Barbara and Caroline on the book selection process. The Circulation Department will be responsible for selecting large print, speed reads, and romance books.
- Danielle created a pop-up display of board games in front of the Teen Lounge, encouraging families to borrow some games to play during the holiday season. Danielle created a sign for the display that directs patrons to the game collection on the second floor, as well.

## Fowler Library

- Fowler staff kicked off November with a third annual Diwali Gala, a celebration of our community and a chance to learn about and share cultural and family traditions. Over 100 people of all ages attended for volunteer-led crafts, henna designs, and rangoli.
- ArtScape hung the final community art show of the year, “Generations”. Each artist submitted work not only by themselves but by other artists in their families, creating an incredible sense of history and showcasing creative continuity.
- Regular programming for all ages continues to attract loyal crowds. For younger audiences, a new PJ Storytime has joined Baby Time, Storytimes, and Messy Fun in the weekly schedule. Formerly the MCBA Book Club, the Bookworms has expanded to include middle schoolers. For adults, Gentle Flow Yoga, Art for All Abilities, Stitch Circle, and English Conversation Circle have devoted followings, as do the many book clubs.
- With help from volunteers, community donations, and seeds from the Seed Saving Workshop, the Seed Lending Library is well stocked with native seeds, in time for Winter Seed Sows in January.
- Fowler staff have continued to offer weekly outreach storytimes to Concord Carousel and Concord Children’s Center, and they offered their first of planned monthly storytimes at Concord Montessori.



## Innovation & Communications

- The Monumental (Re)Make project is 10% completed! [This is how the community participates](#) in this fun, free collaborative art project!
- Participants in November Workshop classes created beautiful watercolor paintings, needle-felted birds, giant cross-stitch designs, custom-printed charcuterie boards, and more.
- The Workshop loaned out **195 tools** in November - that’s a lot of crafting!

## Technical Services

- Tech Services added 500 new items to the Library collections in November including 50 popular board games!

- Staff attended an in-person Minuteman Library Network's Tech Services Interest Group meeting held at Goodnow Library in Sudbury. A Tech Services staff member, representing the Library's Green Team, attended the Town of Concord Conservation & Climate Coffee.

## Special Collections

- Concord Prison Outreach showcased its [Concord Prison Outreach - Concord Reformatory Cemetery Project](#). Unnamed were named through multi-media materials, including art panels, spoken biographies, digital presentations, and panelist storytelling.
- Historian Beth van Duzer spoke about her research in her presentation [Crowdsourcing the American Revolution](#), including finding individuals who fought for Concord during the eight years of the war, who died in service, and where they are buried.
- The exhibition [Alicia Keyes: New Pathways to Beauty](#) features Concord artist Alicia Keyes's paintings, sketches from Special Collections, and pieces on loan from the Emerson and Keyes families and the RWE Memorial Association. This exhibition is on display October-December. A well-attended gallery talk was held on November 9, which included attendees Jay and Jared Keyes.
- The exhibition "Illustrated", showcasing work by children's illustrators who have visited Concord over the years, has been moved into the Children's Room at Fowler as a permanent display. We're excited to have these beautiful pieces on display instead of in storage!
- Past Special Collections presentations and lectures are available streaming [here](#).