

Concord Free Public Library

Director's Report December 2023

Reference Services

- The Reference Department partnered with a number of local organizations in November to co-host programs in the Goodwin Forum, including the League of Women Voters (LWVCC), Concord Prison Outreach, Concord for Ukraine, and Concord's 250th Anniversary Committee. There were 409 total attendees for these programs.
- Other programs included the weekly Thursday Morning Meditation (average of 26 participants), Tuesday Book Discussion group (17 participants), in which the group discussed *Northanger Abbey*, by Jane Austen, and the monthly Cookbook Club (12 participants), in which the group made sweet and savory pies.
- Reference staff moved the graphic novels from the Rotunda to their new home in the Media Room, making room for a new community resources display in the Rotunda.
- Reference answered 283 general reference questions in November and booked 189 meeting rooms for patrons. Staff assisted 108 patrons with technology questions and advised 3 patrons on their reading choices.



Youth Services

Teen Lounge

- Teen ran 7 programs in November with a total attendance of 40 teens attending.
- Weekly Dungeons and Dragons was the most attended series program (featuring the use of chatGPT in a rap battle against a giant sentient snake deity); the Videogame Tournament was the single best attended program. The Tournament brought in a lot of new faces and requests for similar programs in the future.
- The Unhoused Care Packages program collected 22 full kits for the Concord-Carlisle Community Chest. Each package included warm weather gear, many items of which were generously donated by the Workshop's Thursday Knitting Circle. Many thanks to them for collaborating with the teens on this!
- The Teen Librarian visited CCHS to discuss a partnership with the school librarian to collaborate on an author event for young adult authors.

Children's Library

- November was a month of community partnerships in the Children's Library, and Youth Services staff were thrilled to partner with...
 - Katie Carr, ELA Curriculum Specialist from Alcott School, to present the second part of the Supporting Your Early Reader series, where parents and educators learned how to support the language development of early readers,

- Concord Museum, to celebrate the Family Trees event by hosting a craft program to design mini hat ornaments for a tree based on the book *Very Good Hats*, by Emma Straub,
- and Commonwealth Ballet, to present the annual Nutcracker Reading (complete with real ballerinas) to an audience of 87 fans.
- In Make-It! Club, kids experimented with balloon rockets, created beaded snowflakes, and upcycled weeded audiobook CDs into suncatchers.
- Musical Monday continues to be a popular draw for families, with crowds reaching over 100 attendees! In November we welcomed back crowd favorite Rockabye Beats, guitarists Hugh Hanley and Alan Goodrich, and ukulele player Julie Stepanek.



Circulation

The Circulation Team...

- Circulation had 17,051 transactions and welcomed 50 new patrons to the CFPL family. Circulation staff created book displays with the topics “Read the World” and “Family Secrets” that both patrons and staff enjoyed!
- Patrons reserved 153 museum passes, with the New England Aquarium in first place and the Museum of Fine Arts in second place. The Friends renewed passes for the upcoming year and added the Gore Place Museum to our offerings.
- Several Circulation staff combined their collection development skills with front line knowledge of patrons’ interests to create an adult fiction book selectors group.
- Circulation began preparing for the upcoming launch of the new catalog, Aspen, and continued their involvement with professional development and the CFPL’s Sustainability initiatives.
- Circulation greeted many additional visitors over the Thanksgiving holiday, saw a significant increase in interest in our puzzles and games, and enjoyed creating snowflakes and decorating the department for the winter holidays!



Fowler Library

- Fowler kicked off November with a Diwali celebration, complete with henna, rangoli, button-making, diya-decorating, and treats. Over 120 people attended. Staff worked with community members to create a joyous occasion and sharing of traditions.
- Carousel Preschool returned for their weekly storytimes after a brief hiatus at the start of the school year.

- Our busy community continued its visits to Fowler storytimes. Young patrons welcomed wonderful guest readers Tracey, a volunteer from the Council on Aging, and Alisa, a local nurse and mother to two storytime regulars.
- West Concord's newly formed Fine Art Studio offered an extremely well-received Batik class. Due to popular demand, Fowler will host two more classes in January.
- With assembly help from volunteers, staff gave out 342 of our popular Take and Make kits. Crafts included paper plate dinosaurs for Di-November, our favorite gratitude turkey wreaths, paper snowflakes, and wreath ornaments.
- Ongoing programs, from book clubs to crafts to preschool programs, continue to attract loyal followings.



Innovation & Communications



- The Workshop saw its biggest month yet with more than 125 tools loaned to the public during Open Maker Hours!
- November programs included Melt & Pour Soap Making, Concrete Cast Coasters, Embroidered Mushrooms, and Card-Making with the Cricut.
- Just in time for the colder months, the Workshop has expanded its lending collection of crochet hooks and knitting needles to include sizes smaller than a millimeter and as large as an inch!

Technical Services

- Staff members decorated the Main Library Lobby for the upcoming holidays and welcomed the annual Gingerbread House. Dr. Resciniti baked 31 batches of gingerbread to construct this year's house which weighs approximately 150 pounds. It will be on display in the Rotunda at the Main Library through mid-January.
- Reclassification of the biography book collection is still ongoing.



Dr. Resciniti with this year's gingerbread house.

Special Collections



- “Connecting the Community: An Exhibition to Celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Concord Free Public Library” continues to run until December 22 in the Art Gallery at the Main Library.
- On November 16 Professor Lawrence Buell spoke on his new book examining Henry David Thoreau. Buell highlighted Thoreau's claims to fame, several challenging issues in Thoreau's writing, and the delights of reading Thoreau's quirky prose.

Administration and Staffing

- The Library welcomes new Reference Librarian Bethany Doane-Sharma in this December. Bethany will be focused on programming for adults and working at the Main Library's Reference Desk.
- The Administration team is partnering with the Council on Aging and Public Health to support programs and services for seniors on Emergency Preparedness thanks to a grant the COA received from the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging.
- The Library will be hosting the next Concord Social Justice Roundtable on January 16 from 1-3 PM at the Main Library, in partnership with the Concord-Carlisle League of Women Voters and the Concord DEI Commission. The Concord Social Justice Roundtable has been created as a forum for various groups and individuals who share the common goal of helping Concord become a more welcoming, equitable, and inclusive community. It is hoped that this roundtable will allow participants to share learning, ideas, and strategies in the work at hand and provide opportunities for synergy and collaboration. All are welcome to join.