

Reference Services

- Debbie Yong retired in January, after serving the Concord community as a reference librarian for 23 years. She will be missed!
- Reference staff answered 218 reference questions in January and booked 132 rooms for patrons. In addition, staff assisted 77 patrons with technology questions.
- Author Rita Zoey Chin gave a virtual author talk on January 31 to discuss her new novel *The Strange Inheritance of Leah Fern*.
- Concord resident and professor Dennis Taylor led the Tuesday book group in a discussion of poetry by Thomas Hardy.
- Other popular programs in January included the weekly Thursday Morning Meditation, led by Lara Wilson, and the monthly Cookbook Club, in which club members made soup and salad recipes.



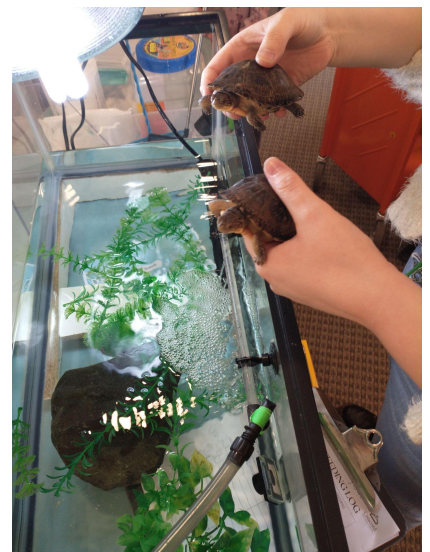
Youth Services

Teen Lounge

- The weekly Dungeons and Dragons program continues to grow in popularity. Participants continue to invite new players, and there were 18 attendees the last week of January!
- Fueled by popcorn, the new Board Game Advisory Board hosts 3 dedicated members who have helped staff playtest some of the games we are adding to the circulating collection.
- Several patrons zoomed into Navigating College Admissions presented by Stand Out for College.

Children's Library

- Local Author Josh Funk visited the Children's Library to read his new book *The Great Caper Caper* to 90 fans.
- The January storywalk was updated to feature *Witch Hazel* by Molly Idle.
- We said farewell to our first pair of Blanding's turtles, who were moved to a bigger tank at the zoo, and we welcomed our new turtles, Louisa and May!
- We celebrated the Year of the Rabbit with festive Chinese lanterns and a storytime featuring the Lunar New Year.
- The Sun Rise Club from CCHS facilitated a Saturday storytime, reading a Jacques Cousteau picture book and leading a craft decorating a coral reef.
- Beede and Books returned! A children's librarian read a storybook and afterwards kids enjoyed an open swim at the Beede Fitness Center.



Circulation

- Circulation staff welcomed 88 new patrons to the CFPL family!
- Thanks to the Concord Free Public Library Corporation, we began our winter doldrums staff morale initiative with weekly giveaways to local businesses.
- Staff processed 136 museum pass reservations, with the Museum of Fine Arts being the top draw. The Friends of the CFPL also sponsored Garden in the Woods/Native Plant Trust to the offerings. This wonderful new pass will be available in March!
- With help from Technical Services and Innovation, Circulation staff launched Lunar New Year and graphic novel memoir displays.
- Circulation staff participated in webinars about collection development and new library software.



Fowler Library



2023 is off to a great start for Fowler, with fun events and strong and growing partnerships. Ongoing programs, including storytimes, free play, book clubs, crafts, and English Conversation Circle, have hit their stride over the last year. As one regular writes, "Stitch Circle is becoming a joyful, sharing gathering," which could equally describe many of these weekly and monthly activities.

- Art for All brought their Arts and Crafts Club to Fowler, where the Friends of the CFPL are helping to sponsor them. This group, for adults with developmental differences, meets weekly to create. So far, they have cut snowflakes, made terrariums, painted bags, decorated art journals, and experimented with watercolors.
- Also sponsored by the Friends of CFPL, Laurie Engdahl offered another extremely popular three-week introduction to watercolors. In response to the popularity of these classes, Fowler plans to host quite a few art classes led by local artists in the coming months.
- Fowler collaborated with the Concord Pollinator Health Advisory Committee, CCHS Green Team, the Concord Land Conservation Trust, and the Natural Resources Division to offer two extremely well-received Winter Seed Sow workshops, generously hosted by Verrill Farm. Thanks to the Friends of CFPL for sponsoring these workshops.

- Fowler had a first, quite successful meeting of a new monthly Game Time with Minute Man Arc. This is part of an effort to strengthen a longstanding partnership, which weakened during the pandemic.
- The art exhibit Flowers and Flow, on display since November, had its closing reception on January 31. This collaboration with ArtScape and the West Concord Green Thumbs enlivened Fowler’s walls during the winter and encouraged patrons to explore the whole Fowler building.
- Fowler staff are taking great advantage of professional development opportunities. Staff are attending coding classes and innovative demos for librarians. Additionally, Laura Mills was awarded a scholarship to attend ALA’s eLearning Collection Development Crash Course.

Innovation & Communications

- The Innovation & Communications team has continued making progress towards the launch of the Workshop later this year and have begun evaluating the Library of Things collection for potential expansion. Additionally, Innovation staff produced new step-by-step guides to the Goodwin Forum A/V system for staff and patron use.

Special Collections

- Special Collections hosted Professor Richard T. T. Forman for his well-attended presentation, “Concord from Above the Trees: Copter Ecology Views.”

Technical Services and Technology

- In January, a total of 862 new books and audiovisual items were added to the Library collection.
- The Main Library has migrated to a new fax service powered by TBS (Total Business Solutions). It is located in the Computer Alcove in the Lobby.
- Thanks to the Town of Concord IT Department, the public wifi access at the Main Library and the Fowler Branch Library received a major upgrade. As a result, wifi users will enjoy faster connections and more bandwidth.



Administration and Staffing

- The Library welcomed Madhavi Obbani who joined the staff as a Library Assistant working at both the Main Library and Fowler Branch Library.
- Sara Dempster will join the Library staff at the end of the month as the Head of Youth Services. Sara joins the CFPL from Chelmsford Public Library where she is the current Head of Youth Services. She has ten years of experience working in positions such as the Head of Teen Services, Teen Librarian, and as an early childhood teacher.