

## Reference Services

- Reference answered 259 reference questions, booked 204 meeting rooms, assisted 124 patrons with technology, and advised 3 patrons on reading choices. Two patrons used the Library's notary service.
- Kate created a display in celebration of Black History Month, while Michelle created a display about eating locally.
- The department hosted a number of exciting programs in February including an author talk by local author Jennifer Crystal, author of *One Tick Stopped the Clock*, about her battle with Lyme Disease. Local actor Sean LeClaire performed his one-man show *LEELA* to an audience of 90 participants. The Tuesday Book Discussion group had a lively discussion of the book *Sing, Unburied Sing*, by Jesmyn Ward, while the Cookbook Club enjoyed recipes from Kathryn Taylor, author of *Love Real Food*. The monthly Open Boardgaming for Adult Series, run by volunteer Matt Ryan, grew in popularity in February attracting nine enthusiastic gamers. The weekly Thursday Morning meditation series continues to attract around 30 meditators every week, while the 10-week series Ancient Wisdom Today, run by Lara Wilson and Jacob Milendorf attracts an average of 15 participants on Tuesday evenings.

## Youth Services

### Teen Lounge

- Teen ran 7 programs in February with a total attendance of 33 teens.
- Our Magic the Gathering draft program on Saturday, February 22nd once again topped the attendance list. The teen participants ended the program earlier than expected due to some competitors having to leave for a sporting event, but the remaining teens formed their own impromptu "mega game" and kept the fun going right up until closing that day.
- Even in this very quiet month, teen still added three more new Dungeons and Dragons players who found the events through our program press. Despite not knowing anyone else at the games, the new players are already making fast friends with our core group.
- The February break made for a quiet month, but also freed up time to train some teen volunteers in preparation for an ambitious Summer Reading Club project. Volunteers are learning desktop design and publishing techniques that will help their peers participate in a version of Reading Dragons that is teen owned and operated (with ample oversight from the teen librarian). The hope is, as a secondary benefit, that those volunteers will also be able to assist in the production of some Magic the Gathering support materials for use at our events. This will ease some financial burden, and make more game staples available to more teens.

### Children's Library

- February was action packed in the Children's Library. February Break week programs offered a wide array of activities for kids and their caregivers to have some fun outside of home. Every day offered a different, special activity: Dinosaur Egg Scavenger Hunt, Family Paint and Sip art project, making Plant Slime, a special



edition of Make-It Club: Break-It Club (photo on right).

- Members of the CCHS Chamber Music Group came to perform at Alphabet Storytime, wowing children with their playing and inviting them to sing along with songs. “The Wheels on the Bus” was a particular favorite.
- Laddie the collie has resumed his regular visits to the Main with his handler, Holly Kimball. His calming demeanor was positive for kids, teens and adults alike.

## Circulation

- The month of February and the snowy weather that went with it, brought lots of use of the Puzzle Swap. Many puzzle donations were collected and many puzzles went home with patrons! Patrons have been very enthusiastic about the Swap. Special thanks to Cynthia who keeps the Puzzle Swap going!
- The corridor displays for February were “Romance Reads” which was curated by Stacey. The second corridor display was “Murder, Poison and Pain” which was curated by one of our Makerspace librarians, Jen.
- Karin will be creating displays in the area in front of the teen lounge that will highlight non-fiction books from the collection. The theme for February was “Humans vs. Nature.”
- Circulation staff is still working on weeding projects throughout the library. Sally has been working on the musical score section in the Thoreau Room under the direction of Michelle John. Lots of progress has been made and the improvements are making the musical score section easier to browse.

## Fowler Library

- Fowler Library celebrated and promoted sustainable practices in February:
  - The second annual wreath compost, organized with Mothers Out Front and supported by Concord Department of Public Works, kept over 100 wreaths out of the trash.
  - Staff worked with Concord’s Safe Routes to Schools, the Thoreau PTG, Mothers Out Front, and Principal Sparks to coordinate Thoreau’s Winter Walk to School, garnering a large crowd in spite of frigid temperatures.
  - By offering Winter Seed Sows during storytimes and Craft Lab, staff planted mini-greenhouses with patrons of all ages, sharing information and resources about the importance of supporting local biodiversity.
  - Transportation committee member Phil Posner provided helmet safety instructions so that patrons could create entries for a Yard Sign contest run by Safe Routes to School.
- The Nature Connection, which is located in West Concord, brought Gary the Guinea Pig for the first in a planned series of monthly events encouraging young patrons to connect with nature. Participants also had a chance to create nature mobiles.
- In addition to his monthly Saturday morning, Ricardo Rosales led an extra Musical Morning during February vacation week, drawing a large crowd.



## Innovation & Communications



- The Workshop had a blast celebrating February MAKEcation with a series of parent and child 3D printing workshops and a special Break-It! Club event in which kids disassembled technology destined for the Library's ewaste and recycling to explore what's inside.
- All ages and adult Workshop programs this month included needle felted plants, a watercolor mosaic paint & sip with Pop-Up Art School, and a Stamp-Your-Own Charm Bar.

## Technical Services

- Tech Services staff ordered, received, cataloged, entered and processed 850 new items and added to the Library collections.

## Special Collections

- Special Collections served 84 patrons and answered 50 reference requests received on-site, via phone, and email.
- Project Archivist Julia finished processing the Town of Concord's Celebration Collection and is completing the design for the upcoming exhibition. Project Archivist Matthew is processing the Doris Kearns Goodwin Collection and providing reference services.
- Assistant Curator Jessie has shifted the Concord Authors Collection from the Rotunda to the Trustees' Room, Transcendental Alcove, and Special Collections.
- Curator Anke is working on updating the brochure for the self-guided art tour that will be ready for the Concord 250th celebrations and anticipated increase in visitors to the Library.
- The Bust of Nathaniel Hawthorne (by Maria Louisa Lander) is on loan to Bowdoin College for their exhibition, "Poetic Truths: Hawthorne, Longfellow, and American Visual Culture, 1840-1880" from February 6 - July 20, 2025, in the Markell Gallery at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art.

## Administration

- The Library is in the process of interviewing candidates for the vacant Innovation & Communications Specialist. We are excited to announce the successful candidate soon.
- The Library is preparing for the Concord 250 th celebrations, including creating signage to help direct visitors. Fowler Library will be closed from April 14th through 18th for new carpeting to be installed throughout the building. The Fowler staff will be working at the Main Library during that time to help with an anticipated increase in foot traffic.
- Administration has also begun working on drafting a set of Safety & Security Guidelines for Library staff, including emergency procedures and best practices for daily operations.