



Concord
FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Director's Report

May 2025

Reference Services

- Reference answered 299 reference questions, booked 149 meeting rooms, assisted 111 patrons with technology, and advised 1 patron on reading choices. Two patrons used the Library's notary service.
- The department hosted a number of exciting programs in May including author talks with Liz Kinchen, author of "Light in Bandaged Places" (18 attendees) and Marcella Pixley, author of "Neshama" (17 attendees). The Tuesday book discussion group discussed "The House of the Seven Gables", by Nathaniel Hawthorne, with a large crowd of 21 participants. Meanwhile, 20 Cookbook Club members made recipes by Jenny Resenstrach, author of "Dinner: A Love Story". Psychiatrist and Boston Globe writer Elissa Ely and classical guitarist David Leisner collaborated on an hour-long performance weaving together three topics they find especially imperative in these times: Kindness, Sadness and Steadfastness. The event attracted a large crowd of 68 participants. Other notable programs included the monthly boardgaming group (9 attendees), led by volunteer Matt Ryan, as well as the weekly Thursday Morning Meditation (30 attendees), led by Lara Wilson of Mondiwell.
- Kate created a display of science fiction titles entitled "Other Worlds", while Artie created a display of books about baseball called "Baseball Springs Eternal". Gay created a wonderful display of succulents, which included books about succulents. Michelle and the Green Team organized the annual tree seedling giveaway, which was extremely popular.



Youth Services

Teen Lounge

- Teen ran 7 programs in May with a total attendance of 67 teens and parents.
- To help accommodate the increased number of teen patrons who visit the lounge on Wednesdays, Teen has been experimenting with additional open programming on Wednesdays before D&D. These additional programming options have been working well as an outlet for excess teen energy in these large groups (though some teens have also taken time to visit the Children's room for some chill out time as well).
- In May, Teen completed a survey of teen patrons on what new gaming system they wanted to see in the room. With help from Christiana in the workshop to spruce up some supporting tech, Teen has now added the Meta Quest 3 mixed reality and virtual reality headset! Teens will be introduced to the tech first at some introductory programs with the intention of eventually having the game system available for regular use.
- The Teen librarian met with the Concord Pride '25 committee several times in May to cement musical performers for the events of the day and to coordinate local teen groups who will be marching in the town's Pride precession. Teen invitees from at least four local GSA style groups have committed to participating so far.

Children's Library

- In May, Children's staff partnered with the Concord Bookshop and National Book Award long-listed local author Marcella Pixley to host the launch of her newest book *Neshama*. Marcella shared her writing process and read an excerpt from *Neshama*, in which 11-year-old Anna Fleischman begins to communicate with the spirits of her ancestors.

- Children's also hosted teen volunteer Morgan who presented her program "Literacy in Latin," in which she shared a passion for Roman mythology and the Latin language with a group of eager participants.
- May's Musical Monday series included returning favorites Julie Murray (and her ukulele), Rockabye Beats, and Matt Heaton. The Children's Staff extends their gratitude to the Friends of the Library for their sponsorship, which enables Children's staff to continue to bring fun-filled concerts to the families of Concord.
- Children's staff has been busily preparing for the Summer Reading Challenges, and they look forward to the return of the Rubber Ducky Club and the Reading Dragons programs.

Circulation

- Displays: Danielle and Stacey created a corridor display with the theme of "All Creatures Great and Small" which featured books about animals. On the opposite side of the animal display, Danielle featured books with titles in the following format: The (occupation - ex. Cabinet Maker's) and Relation (ex. Daughter!). Karin worked on a display of non-fiction books featuring items about food—particularly kinds of foods, how foods are sourced, etc. All of the displays were very popular among the patrons!
- Circulation assisted the Green Team in their raffle of serviceberry plants. The raffle was very successful!
- Total circulation to date is 22,980 items. Popular fiction titles included: "The God of the Woods" by Liz Moore, "Broken Country" by Clare Leslie Hall and "The Grey Wolf" by Louise Penny. Top three items with the most local hold requests are: "The Wedding People" by Alison Espach, "The Let Them Theory" by Mel Robbins and "To the Lighthouse" by Virginia Woolf. "To the Lighthouse" is seeing a surge in requests because it is the next title in the Tuesday Book Club!



Fowler Library

- To celebrate National Bike Month and support Safe Routes to School, Fowler staff worked with Bike to School Concord, Mothers Out Front, the CCHS Green Team, and the elementary school PTGs for the Concord Family Bike Festival held at Thoreau School on May 4. Attendees practiced safety during the "Bike Rodeo," crafted, got a look at a range of electric bikes, and got their bikes tuned up by B4 (Bespoke Bikes by Brian). They also got to bring home some great swag thanks to the Friends of Concord Free Public Library and MassBike, and many signed up for the library's Bike for Books program. This event served as a precursor to the successful, magically not-rainy Bike to School events that both libraries supported.
- Despite some unseasonably cool weather, the Fowler backyard saw its share of fun programs. Jess Myles with her assistant (and daughter) Luzia led an all-ages Seed Starting Workshop, the CCHS Green Team led a native plant seed sow, and Karen Pettyjohn led a "Spark Peace" craft session for Students Rebuild. The paper doves paired unexpectedly perfectly with Nature Connection's visit with Rhapsody the dove.
- Fowler hosted the full day Staff Day on May 9, welcoming all departments to West Concord. Jane Stimpson of MLS led a training on AI, and representatives from the Natural Resources Division, OARS 3 Rivers, SuAsCo, and the Concord Land Conservation Trust taught staff about their organizations/departments so that they can better lead patrons to resources about the town's conservation efforts and recreation options. All staff pitched in to prepare 125 bare-root seedlings of the native trees gray dogwood, silky dogwood, button bush, American plum, and beach plum, which were quickly distributed alongside the gallon serviceberry plants to enthusiastic recipients.
- Fowler staff worked with Art for All, the West Concord Cultural District Committee, and the West Concord business community for Spring into West Concord on Saturday, May 17. This year's Flamingo Bingo playfully encouraged community members of all ages to explore the neighborhood, discover new businesses, and celebrate this second town center.

Innovation & Communications

- The Innovation & Communications team is excited to support the Town's Pride Fest initiative again this year with design and program assistance.
- The Workshop loaned 162 tools in May.

Special Collections

- On exhibit in the Goodwin Forum currently is "Warhol's Eagle: Resilience Heard Around the World", a collaboration with the Museum of American Bird Art through July 2025. On April 29th the exhibit was opened with a public lecture by Jennifer S. Tafe, Director of the Museum of American Bird Art. CFPL's The Workshop chose a spring project inspired by Warhol and birds to coincide with the event and installation. The works by children ages 5-10 are on display in the Goodwin Forum as well.
- Special Collections' current Exhibition in the Munroe Gallery is "A Celebration Heard 'Round the World." All are invited to enjoy this display on how April 19th has been celebrated over the past 250 years. In addition, there is a display on the Revolutionary Period in the display cases and throughout the 1st Floor of the Main Library.
- Special Collections had 90 visitors from multiple countries and the U.S.
- On May 3rd we hosted a discussion, "Discord on the Concord: River Ice Breakup and the Revolution of the Seasons" with Professor Robert Thurston.

Technical Services

- In April, Tech Services ordered, received, cataloged, entered and processed 1,048 new items for the Library collections.

Administration and Staffing

- The Library welcomed three new part-time and substitute staff in May: Elle Dunne, Nancy Stafford, and Becca Schneyer will be working at Fowler Library.