

Medway Public Library
Director's Report
February 6, 2024

The people counter reported that there were 5,257 visits to the library during January. Meeting rooms were used approximately 88 times during that period. Patrons used curbside checkout and home delivery 38 times.

A patron generously donated a ukulele to the Library, which we will add to our Library of Things.

The Medway Historical Society plans to donate a plaque, similar to the one at the Ide House, commemorating the history of the library building.

Programs in January & February:

- Toddler Storytime
- Toddler Jam at the Library (twice a week)
- Preschool Storytime
- Move, Groove and Learn
- Stay & Play
- Dance Party Playgroup
- Sensory Bin
- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten

- Unicorn Club
- Homeschool Hangout
- Read the Rainbow
- Puzzle It Out
- PAWS to Read
- Elementary Art Class
- LEGO Club
- STEAM/4-H SCRATCH coding for games (3 sessions)
- STEAM/4-H - Catapults

- Introduction to Robotics Using Arduino
- Middle School Hangout
- Fandom Forward
- Teen Dungeons and Dragons
- Teen Painting
- TeenConnect Hangout

- Crafternoon - Pom Poms
- Crafternoon - Valentines

- Medway Fiber Arts Group
- Library Book Group
- Adult Dungeons and Dragons
- Adult Game Night
- Mending
- Exhibit in the Conference Room featuring photography of Mary Weafer

Youth Services Report - January 2024

Weekly programs

The attendance of our weekly early childhood programs (weekdays at 11am) has continued to increase. Overall, the participant numbers this month were surprising. Despite having no big special event this month, we had 644 participants in the youth services programs. We have had a good amount of young patrons and their grownups who come for Friday's Move, Groove, and Learn Dance Party and Stay To Play afterwards. In the future, we plan to start reworking Wednesday storytime and to select some new pieces of equipment (a pop-up tunnel, for example) for the Friday playgroup. We are also exploring the addition of a Saturday morning kids' yoga class.

The Wednesday middle school program consistently brings in more children, and they continue to return to the library to hang out and create things and generally be a part of the library community outside of the weekly program.

Monthly programs

Unicorn Club has developed a core group of participants. PAWS to Read consistently fills up and has many repeat participants. Read the Rainbow Book Club is small but growing. Our Puzzle It Out program has a few participants but has yet to fully take off. We have plans for it next month that will hopefully draw in more participants. The program worked well as a multi-generational setup, and we plan to explore that further. The Discord gaming meetup continues to be a great way to keep in touch with some patrons who prefer to participate in library programs online. Our current game, Fall Guys, is proving too difficult on PC so we are planning to move to Minecraft (Bedrock edition) after taking a few months to research and test the new game.

Passive programs

Many patrons have incorporated the passive programming into their library routine. Jennifer continues to prepare the most delightful stations. The children's room has a sensory bin, a salt tray, and a story basket with felt board, all equally enjoyed by the children. These open-ended Montessori-inspired stations are a big draw. The stations are changed out at the beginning of each month for new themes.

The juvenile room has investigative tables, also prepared by Jennifer, for older children, and those see heavy use as well. These set-ups often have a take-home component (scratchboard art, fossil rubbing, etc.), and sometimes participants will hand over their creations to be posted around the room. These stations provide tremendous value to our patrons, whose library use has often changed to include playtime with their children, instead of serving as a transactional errand.

In the children's section, we have a number of toys that are past their prime. Due to the growing numbers of participants in the morning programs, there's heavy usage of the children's section from 10am to 11, and then from 11:30 to noon once the program ends. We are working to update the toys in the area.

Displays and sprucing up

There are a number of plans we are hoping to enact before the legislative breakfast. These include repurposing the space near the main entrance upstairs to feature our new books instead of Playaway biographies.

We are also reclaiming the old reference desk in the YA area by cleaning out most of the unused items behind it and having the fax machine relocated to the center counter where the copier, scanner, and tax forms are located. That reference desk will be a satellite space for YA creativity.

Longer-term plans include discussing a better use of the upstairs real estate through a wayfinding and signage audit (MLS is having a session on wayfinding/signage this month) and the completion of shifting the adult nonfiction. The goal is to free up the other side of the YA graphic display for YA nonfiction, a section that is currently shelved underneath the front window and is an inconvenient spot to promote browsing.

The long-term plans for the juvenile room and the children's area are to give them a facelift and some new art (i.e.murals). In the juvenile room specifically, the completion of the juvenile nonfiction cull, the creation of a section for our early chapter book collection, and the subsequent reorganization to open up the space and sightlines will allow for a better patron experience.

For displays, the one in the YA section last month was particularly fun. It offered a "New Year, New Genre" type of display that paired well with the Massachusetts Center for the Book reading challenge goal for January: Read something in a genre you don't necessarily like! In February, there will be Black History Month displays in the children's and YA areas, and we expect to update the story walk early this month too.

Collection development

In January, I purchased the February booklists (anything with a Feb. publication date, plus anything recently added from review sources). My practice for purchasing is to place the order for the next month in the middle of the current month, which gives a good amount of time to allow for processing and to combat potential delays in Ingram shipments. For the regular monthly order, I purchased 30 adult titles, 34 YA titles, and 74 kids' books. This is a fairly standard breakdown for kids' and YA materials, and a little higher than usual for adults. My monthly materials allowance is \$1,800 and most items purchased are print titles. We order Playaways and middle-grade Wonderbooks to meet school summer reading list demands, but we do not find those formats to be popular for our patrons. When it's a lighter month for publishing, I supplement our picture book Wonderbook collection, because those have proven to be popular but they are expensive. I do not generally order audio books or music CDs, and our DVD purchases are limited since these formats, while they still go out, are not nearly as popular as they used to be.

This month, ALA's publishing awards were announced, resulting in a supplemental awards list of 40 items to be purchased. I was pleased to see that we had already acquired a good number of the winners and I added the remainder of the winners and the majority of the honor books to our collection.

Deposit collection/Schools

The new middle school/high school librarian, Sarah Doyle, regularly submits subject and grade-level requests, and I pull whatever we have and request from the inter-library loan anything else appropriate to supplement the school library's collection for different study units. This month the middle schoolers have been studying the Titanic, Edgar Allan Poe, and the space race. Sarah has also visited a few times to "shelf shop" for the middle and high school libraries, and then I deliver her selections for display there. We hope to make this a regular occurrence.

Thanks,
Audrey

Makerspace Report - January 2024

In January, 412 people either used the Makerspace equipment or wanted a tour to see what we offered. We had several families using the craft items during the week as well as on Saturdays. The paper crafts, stamps, and recyclables were a big draw, and various children working on special projects made use of the painting supplies. Shrinky Dinks and pom pom making continue to be a fun activity for the children who stop by after school to spend time in the Makerspace. They also enjoy using the two 3D printers. Two of the children even took advantage of our sewing machines by making pillows with the room's supplies.

Our Robotics group continues to meet every Monday night. We have started phase two of the program where the students will design robotic vehicles, and they are currently in the process of prototyping the chassis using cardboard and hot glue. They will continue to add different components throughout the remaining school year.

January's STEAM session was a huge hit. We had a three week program teaching the students how to code a game using Scratch, a high level programming language. They also learned about the impact of trash in the oceans. February's STEAM session will focus on catapults with the plan that the children will build their own structure and then test it out using safe projectiles.

January marked the return of the Teen Dungeons & Dragons and Adult Dungeon & Dragons groups. In late January, we also had a successful teen acrylic painting class where tweens used acrylic paints and bubble wrap to create a unique piece of art on canvas. The Medway High School Art Club also taught a very popular art class to elementary school students where they learned to use oil pastels.

Other library programs have continued to utilize the Makerspace since it is an area where kids can be "messy". Unicorn club & Middle School Hang Out took advantage of the large conference tables as work spaces. The middle schoolers also enjoyed using the computers and 3D printers during the weekly Wednesday program. The adult Fiber Arts group continued to meet twice per month as well. The Stamp Club also used the space as an additional meeting room.

For a more detailed look into the usage of the space: Patrons used the large format printer to create poster size prints. Several patrons took advantage of the Epson scanner to convert slides and photos to digital images. Other patrons used the VHS to digital converter and VHS to DVD converter machines. The computers, DVD buffer, laminator, and 3D printers were also used. There were several certifications for the 3D printer this month. On the craft side, patrons used the glue gun, paper crafts, and children activity supplies. Several used the sewing machines throughout the month, and patrons have also stopped by to use the fabric and yarn.

Also this month, the bulletin boards have been redone by Jennifer in preparation for the legislative breakfast on March 8th. We chose to highlight the Makerspace and all that it has to offer. Photos of recent Makerspace creations were collated into a bulletin board display titled "Makerspace Snapshots" in the children's section. In the YA area's bulletin board, the theme "Made Here by You" features pieces of spin art, diffusion art, stained glass coloring and painting made by the middle schoolers. The downstairs board near the lower entrance now highlights some of the machines that can be used to create various items.

In February, we will hold two crafting sessions as well as STEAM. Both Dungeons & Dragons groups will continue meeting. We are also holding an Adult Game Night on February 22nd, and a new program where we will help people with their mending projects will start on Saturday, February 24th. We are hoping to make these regular monthly programs.

Sincerely
Diane Busa
Makerspace Coordinator

Meetings & Webinars in January included:

Zoom meetings with directors of small libraries in Massachusetts
Department Managers Meeting
Conflict Conversations: Empathetic Dialogue in Volatile Times (Mass Municipal Association)
Legislative Breakfast Planning Meeting
Budget Meeting
Minuteman Membership Meeting
SUP Policy Work Group Meeting
SUP Medway Coalition Meeting
Staff Meeting

Meetings & Webinars in February will include:

Zoom meetings with directors of small libraries in Massachusetts
Department Managers Meeting
SUP Policy Work Group Meeting
NELA IT group meeting
Finance Committee Meeting
Cultivating and Sustaining the Relationship-Driven Library
NARCAN Training (Margaret & Audrey)
Generative AI program
Ryan Dowd presentation - Autism

Other

The lower level was open 17 nights from 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm in January. Eighteen individuals used computers and the Makerspace. A total of 58 people attended 6 meetings and programs after 8:00 pm.

Margaret Y. Perkins, Library Director