

Town of Limerick Public Library

Librarian's Report 2021

Our goal at the Limerick Public Library is to provide many resources for all of our community. Whether through books, DVD's, reference materials, computers, etc., it feels like we have all been taking a crash course in what has been called "creative thinking" and adjusting the way we may do things or provide programs. We have been thinking about it as a way to really look at how we serve the public. How can we support parents and caregivers? How can we provide important resources to patrons who are unable to get to the library? How can we keep up with the new and innovative without abandoning the tried and true? This year, we have been reaching out both virtually and physically. The Limerick Public Library staff is flexible, dedicated, and creative. We always look forward to seeing our patrons and helping meet their library needs, whether it's entertainment, education, or enrichment. On December 28, 2020 we closed for Curbside Pickup only and then on January 25, 2021, we opened for appointments and curbside. We finally opened our doors again on February 8, 2021. We were all masked so you couldn't see our smiles, but they were there and we were happy to see our patrons. We have been able to continue offering "take and make" kits. We expanded the number of eResources and book lists. We provided links to many free online resources, some of which were temporary due to the pandemic. Our interest is to ensure that you find what you are looking for at the time you need it, and conversely, offer you ideas, resources, and experiences that you might not even know were available. We are in this together! We have learned a lot about how to adapt library services to changing circumstances. Through it all you were right there with us, continuing to support us in every way. We encourage you to think about things you wish the library would do and share those thoughts with us. While we can't solve every problem or know what's around the corner, together we have proven that not only can we survive, but we can thrive working TOGETHER.

In 2021, the following items were added to the collection: 414 adult books, 358 children's books, 23 audio books and 92 DVD's. The total of all additions was 887. These additions to the collection were made possible through budgeted purchases and generous donations. Circulated in 2021, were 9,559 books and 2,179 non-book materials. Our curbside pickup service was utilized 113 times. The library has 1,379 active patrons with library cards (an increase of 8%), some of those are family cards "one card used by multiple family members". Through the Inter-Library loan system we borrowed 463 books (an increase of 77%) for Library patrons from libraries throughout the United States and we loaned 31 books to other Maine Libraries. Patron visits for 2021 totaled 4,085 (an increase of 16%). Our patrons borrowed 1,463 electronic books (an increase of 8%) using our Bibliotheca/Cloud Library subscription that we purchased through the Maine State Library. The public computers were used by 611 patrons (an increase of 12.5%). Overall our library numbers (borrowed, added, patrons, ebooks, etc.) have all increased from 2020.

We did not renew the reduced admission pass to the Maine Wildlife Park in Gray in 2021 but WILL have it available for patrons to borrow in 2022.

Fundraising: Book sales, DVD sales, donations and the sale of the calendars, generated \$2,463 (an increase of 37%). We were able to have our annual Book Sale in July and we've had an ongoing book/DVD sale throughout the year. We received cash donations and book donations from some of our patrons. Incomes from these were used to purchase books and programming materials.

The Limerick Public Library received \$2,750 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This money, from the Federal Government, was part of the emergency funding for budgetary expenses brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic. With this money we were able to purchase 2 room air purifiers, masks and other

PPE supplies, books, StoryWalk supplies, curbside cart, sidewalk sandwich board sign, and supplies for the Adventure Back Packs.

We were open for most of 2021 (with exception of 5 weeks at the beginning of the year when we returned to curbside only). We had take and make craft/activity kits that were taken by 1,012 participants. We have returned to some in house programs: book discussions, artist receptions, painting, Halloween costume donation and give away, animal tracks, etc. We've added a second book discussion group starting in January 2022, We also had other programs including : Valentine crafts, Take your child to the Library craft, Back yard Bird Count –was a great success, financial literacy handouts thanks to Gorham Savings Bank, star wars craft, National Library Week, Earth Day, summer reading program and take and make bags (we gave out over 350 bags), story walk which had a great response from participants and Facebook post, town scavenger hunt with area businesses was very successful and we gave prizes out to the participants who completed the hunt, back to school kits, pumpkin kits, Fall fun kits, Winter wonderland kits, and other holiday take and make crafts, activities and worksheets, mitten/hat tree where we received many donations and had many items taken by families, adults and children, and we had a Tiny Art Exhibit with 32 participants creating art on 4"x4" canvases.

The annual Summer Reading Program was a virtual program in 2021. The Maine State Library purchased the subscription to Beanstack, a reading challenge software program, for libraries in Maine to use. We had 105 children register for our program with 70 active readers. The readers logged over 91,400 minutes read and earned 505 virtual badges. This was a very successful virtual program during another stressful year. The Masonic Bikes for Books giveaway was a success with 4 children receiving new bikes and helmets.

We also had the ITDRC (Information Technology Disaster Resource Center) install, for free, a new router, switch, antenna and access points at the Library and Municipal Building. This means our WIFI is faster inside the building and outside. ITDRC launched its projectConnect in response to changes in the e-learning environment due to the pandemic and the challenges of connectivity for many families. The program provides free WIFI access points so that community members can access internet resources, including distance-learning. Thanks to the ITDRC our FREE WIFI is amazing!

We are also working on our website (Library page(s) on the Town Website). We're including more links to other resources and hopefully improving the flow and usage of the website. If you have any ideas of what you would like to see on the website, please let us know.

Thank you to the 19 volunteers who donated 85.5 hours of service in 2021.

For current news, activities, and programming visit the Library's Facebook page. The online catalog, monthly newsletter, and calendar are available on the Library page of the Town of Limerick web site at: www.limerickme.org/library .

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia E. Smith

Library Director/Librarian