

# **Town of Limerick Public Library**

## **Librarian's Report 2022**

Libraries help community members discover their potential as individuals and as a society. A library is truly a democratic place where everyone belongs. In 2022, we continued to show growth, transition, and renewal at the library. As we rolled with the punches of the pandemic, we welcomed many of you back into our space and began to revive what we do best— bringing people of all ages together. 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., we are always looking to improve and/or expand our services and 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? One change we made, during the fall of 2021, was to install a new router and access points to the Library. This change provides high speed Wi-Fi access to our community members. Another change we are making is re-barcoding our inventory and patron library cards. This will increase inventory usage for all libraries. 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. We have been able to continue offering "take and make" kits, expanding the number of eResources and book lists, and providing links to many free online resources. 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 have learned a lot about how to adapt library services to changing circumstances. 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 continue to survive, but by working TOGETHER we continue to thrive.

In the fall of 2021 and throughout 2022, we have been re-barcoding to a new 14 digit bar code system on our inventory (over 20,000 items) and patron library cards. We are excited to become part of the Maine consortium of libraries using a new library system called Polaris. Our patrons will be able to request from the libraries in the consortium any book/item to check out, as well as, allowing patrons from other libraries to request our books/items to borrow. This will increase inventory usage for all libraries involved in this consortium. We have added the increased cost of the Polaris Library system, as well as, increased van delivery usage to our 2023 budget.

Also in the fall of 2021, ITDRC (Information Technology Disaster Resource Center) installed, for free, a new router 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 learning environment due to the pandemic and the challenges of connectivity for many families. The program provides free Wi-Fi access points so that community members can access internet resources, including distance-learning. Thanks to ITDRC our FREE WIFI is amazing!!

We recently created our own website with the help of PiperWebs. They will provide continued training and ongoing support to the library staff. We are very excited about our new website and the flow of information it will provide. Please provide any feedback or suggestions you may have.

In 2022, the following items were added to the collection: 429 adult books, 414 children's books, 6 audio books and 41 DVD's. The total of all additions was 890. These additions to the collection were made possible through budgeted purchases and generous donations. Circulated in 2022, were 8,132 books and 1,949 non-book materials. Our curbside pickup service was utilized 15 times. The library has 1,494 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 721 books (an increase of 56%) for Library patrons from libraries throughout the United States and we loaned 124 books to other Maine Libraries. Patron visits for 2022 totaled 5,211 (an increase of 28%). Our patrons borrowed 2,051 electronic books (an increase of 40%) using our Bibliotheca/Cloud Library subscription that we purchased through the Maine State Library. The public computers were used by 619 patrons (an increase of 1.3%). Overall our library numbers (borrowed, added, patrons, ebooks, etc.) have all increased from 2021. We have park passes for patrons to use – reduced park admission for Maine Wildlife Park Pass and have added the Maine State Park Pass in 2022.

Fundraising: Through donations, book sales, DVD sales, we raised \$2,835 (an increase of 15%). We decided to have an early book/DVD sale in February/March, then we did another one in June/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. We also paid PiperWebs initial/setup charge from our book sale funds. The annual contract fee, starting in 2023, will be charged to the computer expense account.

We continue to provide take and make kits for the children during most months, as well as, return to school bags, fall fun bags, winter wonderland bags. During 2022, we gave out 967 take & make kits and activities. The library continues to have book discussions for 2 adult groups in the morning and evening. We added a Tween/Teen Book Club in June 2022. They meet in the afternoon and we provide snacks for the attendees. We had some in-house programs during 2022 – Dr. Gan Xu – Japanese Zen Garden discussion, rock painting with children/adults, Kevin St. Jarre author talk, we had several painting programs for adults and children, author talk with Elizabeth Macalaster. Each month we continue to have an Art Exhibit showcasing local area artists. We have returned to our in-house programs: book discussions, artist receptions, author talks, painting, Halloween costume donation and give away, animal tracks, etc. We also had other programs including : Valentine crafts, Take your child to the Library craft, financial literacy handouts thanks to Gorham Savings Bank, star wars craft, National Library Week, Earth Day, 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. We also added a Ukulele beginner class that completed a six week program and provided a small concert to our Story Time patrons. We are starting another six week class in January with all new students registered. We started a Lego Club in April, on Tuesday afternoons and Saturday mornings. In February, we had a huge response for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Many families enjoyed counting the birds in their backyard and recording the results online.

We have also added to our “Library of Things” – a code reader for patrons having issues with their car, metal detector, 6 ukuleles, bubble machine, digital multi-reader, energy detector and voltage reader as well as our backpacks for night sky, nature trail, bird watch and backyard bugs.

The annual Summer Reading Program was a virtual program in 2022, but we will be switching back to a manual system for the summer 2023. The Maine State Library purchased the subscription to Beanstack, a reading challenge software program, for libraries in Maine to use. We had 78 children/teens/adults register for our program with 62 active readers. The readers logged over 66,000 minutes read, entered 826 book titles and earned 489 virtual badges. Thanks to the Masonic Freedom Lodge #42 for helping to sponsor the program by donating 6 bicycles and helmets to the kids through the Masonic Bikes for Books program. The Masonic Freedom Lodge had increased the number of bikes/helmets by 2 this year. We thank them for this wonderful program. We would, also, like to thank the Limerick Village Variety, Limerick Sea Food Shack

and Ice Cream and the Dough Boys Donut Shop for offering coupons to the children/teens who completed the Summer Reading Program.

We continue to help patrons with job searches, resume writing and job applications, and assistance with any technology questions. The library offers photocopying and faxing services. If needed, we train patrons on the Atrium Catalog system and how to access and utilize the full benefits of the system from home including reserving books, e-books, etc. We issue Portland Public Library cards to Limerick Public Library patrons, allowing them access to the many of Portland's digital resources.

Another service we provide is proctoring exams for adult students at no charge.

Thank you to the 23 volunteers who donated 369 hours of service in 2022.

For current news, activities, and programming visit the Library's Facebook page. The online catalog, monthly newsletter, and calendar are available on the Limerick web site at: [www.limericklibrary.org](http://www.limericklibrary.org) .

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia E. Smith

Library Director/Librarian