

Town of Limerick

Limerick Public Librarian's Report 2023

Our annual report provides an overview of the Limerick Public Library's financial, statistical information, programs and much more. Our vision is to provide resources that deliver outstanding services, facilities, and programs which meet Limerick community needs.

Libraries are changing and at the Limerick Public Library, you'll still find the items you'd expect: books, magazines, newspapers, computers, puzzles, DVDS's, etc. But increasingly, you'll find many nontraditional resources as well: birding/nature/backyard/night sky backpacks, park passes, board games, kill-a-watt energy detector, ukulele, metal detector, bubble machine, and much more. The same is true of programs. Newer initiatives reimagine how the library can serve the community. The reason for these changes is simple: Literacy is no longer just about being able to read. It takes many forms: cultural, social, civic, environmental, and digital, to name just a few. We want our library patrons to have access to resources and programming that help them become well-rounded, fulfilled citizens. Expanding the role of the library helps us do just that. Each of you has contributed in some meaningful way to help our library thrive. Thank you.

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 goal is to ensure that you find what you are looking for at the time you need it, and conversely, offer 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 spring of 2023, we finished re-barcoding to a new 14digit bar code system on our inventory (over 20,000 items) and patron library cards. In 2024, 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 2024 budget. The following items were added to the collection: 485 adult books, 451 children's books, 14 audio books and 33 DVD's. The total of all additions was 983. These additions to the collection were made possible through budgeted purchases and generous donations. Circulated in 2023, were 13,272 books and non-book materials. Our curbside pickup service was utilized 16 times. The library has 1,487 active patrons with library cards, some of those are family cards "one card used by multiple family members". Through the Inter-Library loan system, we borrowed 777 books for Library patrons from libraries throughout the United States and we loaned 92 books to other Maine Libraries. Patron visits for 2023 totaled 5,159. Our patrons borrowed 2,302 electronic books using our Bibliotheca/Cloud Library subscription that we purchased through the Maine State Library. The public computers were used by 678 patrons. We have park passes for patrons to use – reduced park admission for Maine Wildlife Park Pass and have added the Children's Museum Pass in 2023.

Friends of the Limerick Public Library play readings have returned this year with a full cast of characters. They have also generously paid for some of the summer reading supplies.

Fundraising: Through donations, book sales, DVD sales, we raised \$3,482. Our book/DVD sale had another successful 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 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 2023, we gave out 618 take & make kits and activities. The library continues to have book discussions for 2 adult groups in the morning and evening. We added a Kids Book Club for ages 8-12 in April 2023. They meet in the afternoon and we provide snacks for the attendees. We continue to have in-house programs during 2023 – we had a representative from the Career Center who was available to meet with patrons, as needed, with job search, etc. Shelly Burbank was here for an author talk, which was well attended. We had the Line School students color hands for our Summer Reading Program “All Together Now” display. Friends of the Limerick Public Library Play reading have returned this year with a full house of actors. Each month we continue to have an Art Exhibit showcasing local area artists. Other in-house programs: book discussions, artist receptions, painting, Halloween costume donation and give away, animal tracks, etc. We also had other programs including: Lego programs, Valentine crafts, “Take Your Child to the Library” craft, Star Wars craft, National Library Week, Earth Day, story walk which had a great response from participants and Facebook post, 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. 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, monopoly, scrabble, and many other games.

The annual Summer Reading Program had 84 children and 24 adults participate. The participants read 1,145 books. 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. 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 20 volunteers who donated 153 hours of service in 2023.

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.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia E. Smith, Library Director/Librarian