

Blake Memorial Library - Director's Annual Report 2017

For the Library Association at the April 24, 2018 Annual Meeting

TOTAL CIRCULATION: 12,417 (a 2% decrease from 2016)

DOWNLOADABLE AUDIO & E-BOOKS: 1,031 (a 56% increase from 2016)

VISITATION: 8,473 people (6,588 adults and 1,885 kids) (a 7% increase from 2016)

DOCUMENTED COMPUTER USERS: 1,434 (a 14% decrease from 2016)

ADDITIONS TO THE COLLECTION: 1,361 (not including interlibrary loans, periodicals, or downloadable audios or e-books) (a 11% increase from 2016)

ANNUAL WEBSITE USE: 2,766 unique users for a total of 6,258 website sessions, averaging 1.8 pages/session. The site had a total of 11,280 page views in 2017.

AUTHOR VISITS: Tania Aebi, *Maiden Voyage*; Lucy Maddox, *The Parker Sisters*; Didi Pershouse, *Ecology of Care*; Nancy Kilgore Trout, *Wild Mountain*

SPEAKERS: Presidential Executive Power with Judge Joyce McKeeman, Garden Talk and Tea with Don Avery of Cady's Falls Nursery.

BOOK DISCUSSIONS: *Don Quixote*; *Brown Girl Dreaming*; *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*; *Between the World and Me*

SERVICES: Free Tax Preparation and Filing with Linda Weiss and Marcey Carver; Vermont Health Connect Open Enrollment Period Q&A with Justine Huntington from Little Rivers Health Care

READ ALOUDS: *Brown Girl Dreaming*; Poetry on the Farm @ Crossmolina Farm

SCREENINGS: Corinth Oral History Project Night with video clips of interviews and photos; *The Local Motive* VT PBS documentary followed by discussion panel with local farmers.

ART EXHIBITS: *Shaped by Nature*, a collection of photographs by local photographer Dana Ceccarelli; *Birds of the Northeast*, photographs by John Sutton; *A Sense of Place*, by the local Community Lens photography group; *Mostly Medieval*, needle felted tapestries by Neysa Russo.

CHILDREN and FAMILY SERVICES:

**This is a new report category this year, as the library significantly expanded our services for children and families in 2017.*

- **STORY HOUR** continued every Thursday at 10am year-round, led by volunteers Wendy Heidenreich and Ann Little. Right now, we have a consistent group of 5-7 families who attend regularly. Volunteer Laura Reyla joined the team in 2018.
- **CHILDREN'S LITERACY FOUNDATION (CLiF) PARTNERSHIPS:** I continued to make outreach visits to the Waits River Valley School during their 'Year of the Book' CLiF grant events in the winter and spring of 2017, where I was able to spread the word about library services and hand out library bookmarks and

library card applications. The WRVS librarian, Amy Herrick, and I collaborated to plan summer events and activities for community youth (see Summer Reading Program, below). Also, the library was the recipient of a CLiF Summer Readers grant, which allowed us to host a Comics Workshop and author presentation with comic book artist Marek Bennett, including a CLiF-sponsored book giveaway.

- **SUMMER READING PROGRAM EXPANSION:** In 2017, in collaboration with the WRVS librarian, we expanded our Summer Reading Program to include a **Summer Reading BINGO challenge**. We handed out 118 BINGO cards at the school and library with prizes for kids who completed a BINGO. Additionally, **the library hosted four different children's presenters**—Marko the Magician; the Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences (VINS); storytelling duo Taradiddle; and comic book artist Marek Bennett. In total, including Story Hours, **we hosted a total of 13 programs for children** and families during summer vacation. A total of **477 people attended** these events! Next, WRVS librarian Amy Herrick and I hosted a **book club for kids at the WRVS library**, where we discussed the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award nominee, *Save Me A Seat*, had snacks, and completed some fun activities related to the book.
- In June 2017, the library opened a new **Picnic and Play Area on the library lawn**, including two locally made picnic tables and an outdoor storage box full of games and activities like horseshoes, jump rope, lawn darts, bocce, and more.
- Over the summer, we circulated 25 **SUMMER LEARNING BAGS** in cooperation with the Waits River Valley School, which were very popular.
- **FREE ATTRACTION PASSES:** In 2017, we expanded the offerings of our free and reduced attraction pass program to include the Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences (VINS) in Quechee, VT and the American Precision Museum in Windsor, VT. We also purchased an additional State Parks Pass, our most popular pass.
- On August 21, 30 adults and 11 children gathered on the library lawn to safely view the **PARTIAL SOLAR ECLIPSE** with eclipse glasses donated by a library patron. Our new Picnic and Play Area was a big hit with the children during this event.
- **TOY LENDING LIBRARY:** We just launched a new toy lending library. Patrons can now check out builder/maker/creative-type toys for a two-week period, just like a book! Toys were selected for their potential to build important STEAM skills—science, technology, engineering, art & design, and math.

OTHER LIBRARY USE:

- The **'Simply Neighbors' knitting and handwork group** continues to meet at the library a couple times a month.
- A political activism group, **Defend Democracy**, met on and off at the library in 2017.
- The **homeschool group** continued to meet on Tuesdays in the second half of the 2016-2017 school year. About 20 kids and 15 adults met for a variety of activities—including yoga with Anne Bergeron, Spanish classes with Kimberly Hotelling, chess with Hank Buermeyer, and also ukulele lessons. This group disbanded for the 2017-2018 school year due to losing some teachers and core families.

- The BML fundraising committee hosted about 30 library volunteers for a **volunteer appreciation luncheon** in March.
- The **Women's Fellowship** continued to host some of their meetings at the library throughout the year.
- Linda Weiss has been coordinating a group of **mahjong players** at the library on weekend afternoons.
- **Waits River Valley School held a budget informational meeting** at the library in spring 2017.

TECHNOLOGY & WEB DEVELOPMENT:

- **NEW WEBSITE:** Our new library website launched at the end of 2016, and the site was fully operational for the entirety of 2017, with great success (see annual website statistics, above). The new site now hosts select interviews from the Corinth Oral History Project, the first time these interviews have been available on the web.
- **CLOVER:** The Vermont Department of Libraries launched a **new statewide interlibrary loan system, CLOVER**, in August 2017, to replace their outdated and very clunky old system. CLOVER has made using interlibrary loan much more efficient, and it is easier to find a variety of items from around the state, including from Vermont's public and private colleges and universities.
- **NOVELIST:** The Vermont Organization of Koha-Automated Libraries (VOKAL) launched a new service, **Novelist**, for all VOKAL libraries. NoveList allows both librarians and patrons to use our online library catalog, Koha, to get book recommendations simply by searching for a favorite author or title. Ask Emily if you want a tutorial.
- **LEARNINGEXPRESS LIBRARY:** Through a partnership with the Department of Libraries and several Vermont libraries, community members can now access **LearningExpress Library**, an online educational resources for college prep, test prep, high school completion, career transition, occupation practice exams, and more. See our website for more details.
- **TECHNOLOGY OVERHAUL:** The library updated our aging tech equipment in 2017, working with both Topsham Telephone and Scott Welch of Great Planning Tech.
 - All 7 of our public access computers have been refurbished and are running very efficiently.
 - We replaced an aging router and adjusted our router and network settings, resulting in faster internet speeds for all staff and public computers and devices.
 - We now have a working fax machine. \$1.00 for the first page and \$0.25 for each additional page.
 - We replaced our aging larger format color photo printer with a new color laser printer. Color print outs are available by appointment only with Emily. \$0.50 per page.
 - We now have the ability to scan documents from any public computer. Document scanning services are free.

ON THE HORIZON:

On Friday, April 27 @ 4:30, we'll wrap up our winter/spring Vermont Humanities Council Reading and Discussion Series, 'Making Sense of the Civil War', with *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam*.

The library will be hosting a **Waits River Valley School informational budget meeting on Wednesday, May 2 @ 6:00pm**.

Are you thinking about going solar? Do you want to learn more about solar energy? **Join Becca White from the mission driven solar company, SunCommon, on Monday, May 7 @ 6:30pm at the library for “Solar 101.”** After a brief presentation and Q&A session, we’ll head next door, where Becca will lead us on a tour of Carole Freeman’s recent solar panel installation. Becca will address going solar with both Green Mountain Power and Washington Electric Cooperative.

Another great Plant and Book Sale is set for Memorial Day weekend (May 26 from 8am – 2pm & May 27 from 9am – 1pm). Once again we’ll have thousands of great books carefully sorted by genre and author. As always, the library depends on community support to make this fundraiser a success: we are now accepting book donations (during open hours only, please, and no textbooks, encyclopedias, or moldy/mildew books), and we’ll be accepting donations of plants in the days leading up to the sale.

On Thursday, June 21 at 10:00am, we’ll kick off the Summer Reading Program with author Michael Caduto’s high-energy program, Energy Rocks! More Summer Reading performance dates will be on our website soon. We’ll also be offering another summer reading challenge (or two) to the community with prizes sponsored by library supporter Fu Chang, in memory of his parents.

I have applied for another CLiF Summer Readers grant. With this grant, we’ll be able to offer a CLiF-sponsored summer performance, where each child will get to walk away with two brand new books from CLiF.

The Vermont Humanities Council (VHC) 2018 VT Reads book selection is *Bread and Roses, Too*, a historical novel telling the story of the 1912 “Bread and Roses” labor strike in the Lawrence, MA textile mills as seen through the eyes of a young Italian-American girl and a runaway boy. This fall, in a slate of related programming, we’ll explore New England history as well as the history of immigrants in our country, including a history presentation by Dean Whitlock, author of *Finn’s Clock*, on the Boston Harbor in the 1850’s. Whitlock’s presentation will highlight the Irish immigrant community who worked the harbor.

Last, I want to thank the Board of Trustees, the library volunteers, and the community at large for your support of the library. Because of you, the library is a thriving community and technology center as well as a home for a wonderfully diverse set of books and movies for people of all ages.

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Heidenreich, Library Director