

The Ayer Library

Monthly Report for September 2018

Submitted for the October 16, 2018 Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Adult Collections:

- Graphic Novels (for grown-ups) now have a section of their own near the New Books display, formerly occupied by Biographies.
- Biographies were moved to the historic Reading Room, with Oversize books now located with the Graphic Novels.
- A new microfilm cabinet has been installed in the Reading Room in an effort to save space. The old cabinet has been offered up to other libraries and will be removed shortly.
- New signs have been created for the Audiobooks, Music, Movies, Large Print, New books, Graphic Novels, and Oversized collections.

Adult Displays:

- Banned Books Week
- Voter Registration/U.S. Democracy
- Hispanic Heritage Month
- Edible Wildlife (tie-in with program)
- Covers with Fall Foliage Colors
- Mount Washington/Meteorology/Extreme Weather (tie-in with program)
- National Deaf Awareness Month

Adult Programs & Activities:

| Library Programs | Attendance | Date |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Genealogy Club | 8 | Tuesday 9/11 |
| Movie – <i>Won't You Be My Neighbor</i> | 10 | Thursday 9/20 |
| Mt Washington Weather – Will Broussard | 38 | Wednesday 9/26 |
| Crochet Crafting – with Justine Paulson | 4 | Saturday 9/29 |

- **Adult Summer Reading Program Wrap-up:** Summer 2018's Adult Reading program was Book Bingo. Bingo sheets had 25 squares, each with a different kind of book that patrons could read (some examples: "Read a book set in New England," "Read a book with a one-word title," different genres). Reading a book that corresponded to one square meant that a patron could check off that square. For each full line of five bingo squares that they checked off, patrons could enter one raffle ticket to win a \$25.00 gift cards to one of five local businesses. A total of ten patrons submitted bingo sheets and entered raffle tickets; some submitted full sheets (they read one book for each of the 25 squares), and many more took sheets but either did not read at least five in a row or did not enter raffle tickets by the early-September deadline. We received very positive feedback about this program from patrons, with many patrons saying that they are looking forward to book bingo next summer.
- **Notable Reference Questions Received (answers below):**
 - When was the Ayer "subway" tunnel built?
 - Are there any pictures of the subway tunnel?
 - Where was the old Post Office located?
- **Programs & Activities by Community Groups:**
 - The Friends of the Ayer Library hosted *Ayer Crafts & Native Plant Sale* on Saturday, September 8 on the library's grounds. The event - labeled the 2nd annual, an expanded version of last year's plant sale - was co-sponsored by the Ayer Cultural Council and

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included table displays by local non-profit groups and live music and demonstrations by local crafters and artists. The event raised over \$1100 to help the Friends fund library programs and activities.

- New England Studios successfully closed off much of the Town of Ayer while filming scenes for an as-yet-unnamed TV series during the week of Sept. 17. In addition to filming scenes downtown and at the Shop & Save supermarket, the studio asked for and received permission to use of a portion of the library's parking lot during the afternoon of Wednesday the 19th to stage equipment for scenes they planned to film on the railroad bridge.
- The Ayer Community Garden committee held two organizing meetings, September 4th and 18th, in the library's front room. ACG was founded and has been meeting in the library after the Farm to Fork presentation given in June.
- The Town of Ayer presented the program *Municipal Taxation & Budgeting 101* at the Library on September 25th. Town Accountant Lisa Gabree, Assessing Administrator Tom Hogan, and Town Manager Robert Pontbriand were on hand to outline the processes that the Town uses to set tax rates and to build and manage its annual operating budget. While rainy weather kept the attendance down, Ayer Public Access Corporation was on hand to record the program and make it available for later viewing.

Library Building & Grounds

- New gender-neutral signs were purchased and hung outside the public restrooms.
- Renaud Electric repaired the switch plate on the automatic door of the Youth Services entrance on 9/26.
- Turf Unlimited drained and winterized the landscape irrigation system on 9/27.
- Johnson Controls serviced the gas burner on our boiler and set up the HVAC system for the heating season on 9/28.

Library Director's Activities:

- 1st official day on the job as Ayer Library's new Library Director on Tuesday, 9/4.
- Working with and getting to know library staff colleagues.
- Setting up office workspace, reviewing files, beginning to learn library operations.
- Began standing weekly meetings with Assistant Director Samantha Benoit on 9/18.
- Began individual meetings with library staff and board members on 9/27.
- Meeting and speaking with library patrons and community members in the library, at events, and around the community, including:
 - Participated in the Ayer Crafts & Native Plant Sale hosted by the Friends of the Ayer Library on Saturday, September 8th.
 - Participated in the Holdenwood Trail Run to benefit the Ayer-Shirley Education Foundation in Shirley, MA on Saturday, September 29th.

Library Director's Meetings:

- Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners State Aid Workshop (Auburn, MA), 9/10.
- Town Department Heads, 9/12.
- Ayer Library Board of Trustees, 9/18.
- Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium Expo (Worcester, MA), 9/20.
- Elizabeth Nonis, Friends of the Ayer Library, 9/24.

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- Laurie Sabol, Friends of the Ayer Library, 9/27.
- Kerry Cooper, Assistant Town Accountant, 9/27.
- Scott Kurland, Ayer Public Access Corporation, 9/28.

Library Website:

- Added a “Resources for Learning Basic Computer Skills and Programs” list (computer literacy resources local to Ayer). Printouts of list kept behind desks for interested patrons.
- Created a “Community Resources” page on AyerLibrary.org. This is a list of local resources more comprehensive than the printouts.
- Created separate “Online Resources” and “Media” pages under the “Reference” tab on AyerLibrary.org.
- Updated the website calendar with upcoming events.
- Updated resource list printouts: “At-Risk Resources,” general resources for patrons in need, and “Housing and Food Services.” These are lists that we keep behind our desks and display on the downstairs bulletin board.

Youth Services Programs & Activities:

- In September the Youth Services Department hosted 8 Juvenile programs with a total combined attendance of 188 people.

| Programs | Attendance | Date |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Story Ninja – <i>How to be a Friend</i> | 7 | Tuesday 9/4 |
| Storytime – <i>Fiddle-I-fee</i> | 33 | Thursday 9/6 |
| Story Ninja – <i>American Sign Language</i> | 22 | Tuesday 9/11 |
| Storytime – <i>Visit with Goldilocks</i> | 37 ^a | Thursday 9/13 |
| Story Ninja – <i>Card Games</i> | 19 | Tuesday 9/18 |
| Storytime – <i>Tumble Bumble</i> | 30 ^b | Thursday 9/20 |
| Story Ninja – <i>Cat in the Clouds</i> | 17 ^c | Tuesday 9/25 |
| Storytime – <i>Race Car Count</i> | 23 | Thursday 9/27 |

- a. One of our local grandmas dabbles in ventriloquism and she volunteered to bring in her doll and do a special storytime for us.
- b. With our monthly visit from Suzie and Rosie, the Read Therapy dogs, and their handler Agnes.
- c. Cat in the Clouds is a story about a cat that lived at the Mt. Washington Observatory. This book was chosen to tie-in with the matching adult program that week.

- Our Tuesday evening Story Ninja program is continuing to grow in popularity; in September we noticed 2 new families have now become program regulars.
- Storytime is back in full swing and we have seen a lot of new faces there as well, many of them first-time library users. They have been enthusiastic about the library and complimentary towards our collections and programs.
- We also partnered with the local grant-funded program, The Family Partnership Center (FPC), and they now run one of their storytime programs with Ms. Sarah at the library on Wednesday mornings at 10:45. We have worked with FPC in the past on many different events. (Note: Christina's mother used to be their head playgroup coordinator until her retirement August!) We are excited for this relationship to continue with the new coordinators, Sarah and Amy.
- We continued with our once a month visit from Willow, a Read Therapy dog who belongs to one of our regular families. She comes earlier in the morning and kids have a chance to sit one on one with her and read a story of their choice together.

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- We added two new volunteers to our weekly schedule, Lucy and Kenna. Both are lovely girls and they are a wonderful addition to our volunteer list.

- **Other Youth Services news:**
 - Patrons were very excited by the variety of animals that crossed the Youth Services desk this past month. Sam (Assistant Director Samantha Benoit) found a Monarch caterpillar on her way into work one day and we made a nice home for him/her on the desk. S/he sat there happily for about a week before creating a chrysalis, then hatching into a butterfly early on the morning of 10/5. One of our regular families helped us when it was time to release him outside.
 - We also welcomed some new additions to the Children's Room fish tank in the form of baby Mystery Snails. We've had the fish tank for about 2 months now and we had no idea our snail had laid eggs until we were overrun with adorable baby snails. They lived in a bowl on the desk for a few days and it was great to see both kids and their parents so curious and enthralled. So far, we have removed at least 36 baby snails from our tank – library staff members have been adopting them - and there are still more to come. Mystery snails can lay up to 2,000 eggs at a time, so we are in for an exciting few months. Let us know if you'd like to adopt some!

- **Young Adult (YA)/Teen Programs & Activities:**
 - Book Displays:
 - Staff YA Picks
 - Banned Books Week
 - Hispanic Heritage Month

| Programs | #patrons | Date |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Family Game Night | 4 | Thursday, 9/13 |
| Teen Movie Night | 4 | Wednesday, 9/19 |
| Anime & Manga Club | 12 | Thursday 9/27 |

- While Family Game Night had run as an occasional program in the past, September marks our first attempt at making this a monthly program. New games such as Ticket to Ride and Dominoes were added to the collection this month.
- Anime & Manga Club benefited from Jack Wool suggesting Crunchyroll (an anime and manga subscription service) and figuring out how to play the online stream on the large-screen tv. The kids really enjoyed watching current and short episodes of their favorite anime.
- We're planning to roll out three additional programs for the coming months: Teen Advisory Board (off in September), YA for Adults Book Club, and LGBTQIA Drop-In. Stay tuned!

I would like to thank the following Ayer Library staff members for their contributions to this report: Nancy Askin, Samantha Benoit, Autumn Dore, Justine Paulson, Thomas Tagliavento, and Christina Zoller.

Respectfully,

Tim Silva
Library Director

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| Answers to Reference Questions: 1. Circa 1908 2. Yes, in the Library's collection of glass slide images. 3. In the Meade's Block building (next to Main St. Bank.) |
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