

The Ayer Library
Director's Report for April 2020

Current Operations at the Library

- The Library building remains closed and all in-person Library programs scheduled through the month of May have been canceled or postponed.
- Book drops remain closed and locked. Please continue to hold on to the books, DVDs, and other items that you've borrowed until further notice. All due dates have been extended and no late fees will be charged.
- **Even though the building is closed, library staff members are still available to help answer questions, assist you with online library materials, and so forth.**
- **To request assistance from one of our staff members**
 - **By telephone: Please call 978-772-8250 and then press 0 when you hear the answering message begin to play. You will be able to leave a voice mail message, and someone will return your call as soon as possible.**
 - **By email: Send your message to ayerlibrary@cwmars.org and someone will be in touch with you as soon as possible.**
 - **On Facebook: Message us or post a question to www.facebook.com/AyerLibrary and someone will respond as soon as possible.**
- The Library's WIFI network remains on and available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. The signal extends far enough to cover the library parking lot.

Updates from April 2020:

Library Director's Activities:

- Assistant Director Samantha Benoit, Head of Youth Services Amy Leonard, and Head of Adult Services Barbara Cheeks and I met via a weekly conference call each Tuesday in April.
- I met with and received quotes from two landscape contractors for seasonal maintenance at the Library. Able Landscapers of Pepperell has been hired to maintain the Library's grounds this season.
- On Thursday, April 2nd, I attended a panel discussion webinar hosted by Tech Impact about best practices for remote working during the pandemic.
- On Tuesday, April 28th, I participated in a Zoom meeting facilitated by staff members from the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The meeting was attended by more than 30 library directors from CWMARS libraries as well as CWMARS Executive Director Jeannette Lundgren and other CWMARS staff. This meeting was one of several in which MLS and MBLC staff met with library directors from all of the library networks in Massachusetts in order to learn of and begin to discuss the challenges of re-establishing library services and re-opening libraries once the Governor's stay-at-home advisory is lifted.

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- I continued to work on upgrading or replacing the last of the old Windows 7 PCs with new computers we purchased earlier in the year. I am also periodically running software updates on the current PCs in the building.

Library Operations:

- Samantha, Amy, and Barbara checked in with the rest of the staff on a regular basis and kept them engaged with weekly projects and tasks that could be done from home. Some of the work included:
 - Reading book reviews and building shopping carts of book titles to purchase once we can receive and process physical books again.
 - Adding content to the Library's website and to the Facebook page.
 - Ordering eBooks and eAudiobooks for the Library's OverDrive digital collection.
 - Trying the RB Digital platform and app and its associated collections of audiobooks, digital comics, concert videos, and Acorn TV which features popular programming from the United Kingdom. Based on this trial, we decided to add RB Digital to our collection of online resources.
 - Recording and producing video storytime programs to post on the Library's Facebook page and creating a safe invite-only Ayer Storytime Facebook Group.
 - Locating and sharing links to free video programming hosted by other libraries and educational institutions.
 - Coming up with ideas for small challenges that we can encourage patrons to try at home. Such challenges and games will – if all goes according to our ever-evolving plan – be integrated into a software package called Beanstack that we originally purchased to use with our summer reading programs but which we hope to now use for “stay at home” time as well!
 - Researching how other libraries are responding to this crisis and beginning to compile information about how best to address issues such as handling physical materials safely.
- Since we continue to receive magazines, back-ordered books, and new release DVDs, individual staff members have visited the library every so often to begin cataloging and processing these items.
- The April meeting of the Library's Board of Trustees was canceled.

Library Maintenance:

- On April 2nd, MassCor Industries delivered and installed our new custom-made Children's Circulation desk.
- Henry Renaud of Renaud Electrical visited the library on April 10th to begin to install cabling to allow us to add power, internet, and telephone connections to the new Children's Circulation Desk.
- On Tuesday, April 14th, Jim Thyne of American Energy Management (AEM) and I worked with CWMARS' IT staff to successfully integrate the new HVAC control system-installed

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by AEM earlier this year - into the library's network. This will enable the control system to be programmed and operated via a remote computer connection as well as by the staff PCs within the building.

- Ayer's Director of Facilities Maintenance Chuck Schultz spent April 16th at the library disassembling the Main circulation desk in preparation for the delivery and installation of a new desk from MassCor Industries. Chuck also installed a new diaper changing table in one of the public restrooms.
- Following the dismantling of the Main circulation desk, a small team of staff members began shifting furniture to reorganize staff workstations in the Main Office, removing Samantha's desk from the public area by the entrance. In the Children's Room, similar work is underway to reorganize workspaces, storage, and the location of public computers and the makerspace in the Young Adult area.

I would like to thank the following Ayer Library staff members for their contributions to this report: Amy Leonard, Barbara Cheeks, Thomas Tagliavento, Samantha Benoit, and Christina Zoller.

Respectfully,

Tim Silva
Library Director