

Report of the Library

WOW, 2023 was another record-breaking year for the Fremont Public Library! New and exciting programming, great books, and partnerships with Fremont community groups all helped make the year a successful one. Circulation and event attendance hit their highest numbers to date.

Circulation of books, audio books, DVDs, and magazines rose to 27,592 (an increase of 12% over last year) units for the year. One hundred seventy-one (171) new patrons signed up for library cards. We processed 984 books from Inter-Library Loan for our patrons and sent 1,249 books out to other New Hampshire libraries for theirs. Circulation of digital books, audio books and magazines was 6,049 (increase of 7%). This equates to a cost of only \$0.19 per use.

Top Circulating Books:

1. *Heart Bones* by Hoover
2. *It Starts with Us* by Hoover
3. *Verity* by Hoover
4. *Broken Trust* by Griffin
5. *Mediterranean Dish Cookbook* by Karadsheh

Top Circulating Children's Books:

1. *Hooky* by Tur
2. *Fire Truck Board Book*
3. *Big Truck Little Island* by Van Dusen
4. *Let's Go Thomas* by Durk

Top Circulating DVD/BluRays:

1. Shark Tale
2. Bourne Supremacy
3. Bourne Identity
4. Revenant
5. Yellowstone Season One

Top Circulating Magazines:

1. People
2. New Hampshire
3. Yankee
4. New Hampshire Home
5. Mother Earth News

The Library bookmobile service expanded even more this year. We made many trips delivering and dropping off library items to patrons who couldn't drive, or were ill. This service is

available to all residents of Fremont so please let us know how we can help you. Whether you can't drive, are too busy or anything in between, your library is here for you, and can make sure you get whatever library services you need.

News from the Children's Room

2023 was a busy year for the Children's Room at the Library! Preschool story times, elementary book clubs, sensory-free play time along with weekend family movies continued to be a great opportunity for children and their caregivers to socialize and have fun all year long.

June saw the start of the Summer Reading Program with a great turnout for the annual kick off barbecue. We were able to sign up over 130 children for the program! Although we had lots of rain, the weather did not dampen spirits as participants enjoyed programs from The Seacoast Science Center, UNH Marine Docents, collage artist Michael Albert, Fremont Beekeepers, and Misa's Clean Kitchen.

The fun and learning continued into the fall and winter. The 1,000 books before kindergarten



program was introduced for the youngest of our patrons. In August, the library staff partnered with the Police Department, Leon Holmes our Road Agent extraordinaire and Parks and Rec to offer a gem dig and pizza program that saw over 50 participants. The annual third grade field trip from Ellis School took place in October. The students received their own Library card, got a tour of the Library and were able to check out 2 books!

Programming continues each week and new programs are presented all the time! Updates and calendars can be found on Facebook, Instagram and the Library website.

The Library staff would like to thank all the volunteers that have helped to make the Children's Room the vibrant place it has become, but especially Denise Driscoll, Liza and Eli Manner, Michael Rydeen, Joan Robinson,

Michelle Gallant, Sergeant Mike Buckley and Maria Knee. Also, thanks to the Rec Commission for providing museum passes for our patrons, and the Library Association for helping with the summer reading programs!

~Submitted by Cheryl Rowell, Children's Librarian

And that's not all....

Cathy, our Assistant Librarian, has been doing her part in keeping Fremont fit. Every Friday at 9:30 AM and Wednesday at 3 PM she led "Walk Away the Pounds." This low impact exercise video was great fun and a good way to keep moving.

Cathy also spearheaded our "Afternoon Literary Adventures" each month on the fourth Wednesday at 1PM. This reading group is open to all readers and covers all genres. Lots of fun, tasty treats and lively discussions were had. New members are always welcome.

Our Science Fiction/Fantasy book group was active throughout the year. We discussed works of speculative fiction past and present. New members are always welcome.

The Library offers many services for the public. Computers are available to create documents or just check your email. Color printing and faxing are available for a nominal cost and the Wi-Fi is always free. We have a telescope to lend for sky viewing, as well as snowshoes for those who may want to walk the trails behind our building during the winter. We are also happy to schedule an impromptu class on accessing the State Library online application "**Libby**", which provides books and audiobooks to download to your new tablet or phone.

On Fridays patrons are able to schedule technology time to bring in troublesome phones, tablets, computers, etc. so we can help you learn how to utilize these devices to fit your needs. Monday and Friday mornings brought fitness and relaxation with our Tai Chi class. Patrons learned and practiced this low impact ancient art.

Our "free book table" was replaced with a "free book cabinet". This way people always have access to free books no matter what the weather. The books are constantly restocked so anyone can stop by and grab a few to keep or share.

The Conservation Commission partnered with the Library in April to present a night of New Hampshire turtle information. Local resident and turtle rehabilitator Chris Bogard shared her expertise and experiences working with these important reptiles. This well-attended event discussed all our local turtle species, their significant benefits to our environment, and how we can protect them.

In September the Library hosted our sixth annual Scarecrow contest. The kickoff cookout was attended by over 200 people (we lost count) and representatives from the PTA, Garden Club, Friends of the Library, Parks and Rec, Litter Free Fremont made the day a true community event. Special thanks go to the Fremont Fire Rescue Department who showed us their safety equipment, Town Historian Matthew Thomas who talked about Fremont in the Civil War and also to the Fremont PD who gave tours of their police car. People were also treated to a collection of antique cars displayed by local enthusiasts. Burgers and hot dogs were expertly grilled by Paul Nuzzi and Tom Murdock, grill masters extraordinaire. Volunteer face painting by Denise Driscoll and Liza Manner were huge hits, as were all the arts and crafts available for patrons of all ages. The Peterson family's "Scarecrow on a Tractor" won our Town Scarecrow

Contest. All entries were posted on the Fremont Community Page and Library Facebook page. Our cookouts are free and open to all. Food was donated by The Fremont Library Association, a non-profit organization chaired by John Hennelly.

The Library would like to express its gratitude for all the work and support the Friends of the Fremont Library group provides. New President John Rand completed his first year and he and his team worked hard to offer new and exciting programming. This included "The History of New England Stone Walls" presented over the summer. This informative and interactive program illustrated the fascinating "why's" and "how to's" of this truly New England phenomenon. In November the Friends presented a talk with Matthew Thomas. Our very own local historian always draws a crowd and mesmerizes us with stories of our local history. The Friends also sponsored the vocal group *The Concord Coachmen* in December. The Fremont Friends of the Library are always looking for more members. Please check the library website for information on future meetings.

The Library community room remains open to Fremont residents and non-profit groups for gatherings of all kinds. This year we hosted: The Rockingham ATV Club, Fremont Bible Study, knitters, quilters, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Anime Group, Fremont Condo Associations, Sanborn High School Drama, Sanborn High School AP Calculus study group, Fremont Garden Club, Conservation Commission, Open Space Committee, rug hookers and assorted proctored exams. Giving Hands, our local knitting group, and other knitters made and donated over fifty pairs of mittens, hats and scarves this year. Their hard work really makes a difference to those in need. These beautifully done items were free in the Library foyer for any who needed them. The Gates family, in memory of Marilyn, continued to maintain the outside garden with wonderful seasonal decorations and plantings. Thank you for your donated time and resources.

As always...

Our team here at the Library would like to thank our Trustees John Hennelly, Emily Clark and Arlene Nuzzi for all their efforts and support over the years. They are always there for us with ideas, help and guidance.

Special thanks go to Heidi Carlson, Jeanne Nygren and the whole team at the Town Hall for their endless patience and willingness to share their vast experience and knowledge.

I would like to personally thank the dedicated, knowledgeable and hardworking staff at the Library. Cathy Murdock, Cheryl Rowell, Anne Beliveau, Bridget Abney, Emily Abney and Ruby Drake. You are all true professionals and stupendous local resources who are making a difference in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Abney
Director Fremont Public Library

Photo courtesy of Michelle Gallant