

FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING – HEAD LIBRARIAN REPORT 2021

I want to start by thanking the Friends of the Library for their generous and continued support of the Newburyport Public Library. In spite of the many challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Friends of the NPL were steadfast in their role as library advocates and funders.

Thanks to the efforts of the Friends, the Library's FY 21 municipal budget was supplemented by \$23,700 to support the museum pass program; programming for children, teens and adults; a video streaming service; and the purchase of databases and collection materials for the Archival Center.

This year the Friends, on behalf of the Library, applied for and received a NAID Foundation grant of \$10,890 to fund the completion of phase 6 of our historical newspaper microfilm digitization project. Library staff and patrons can now access digitized copies of the Newburyport *Daily News* through 1985. The Library also purchased additional assistive technology for patrons with the remaining FY20 grant funds from the Essex County Community Foundation (the Greater Newburyport Fund for the Blind).

The COVID-19 pandemic health crisis continued to dominate the 2021 fiscal year as the Library implemented a phased re-opening plan based on the Governor's and Massachusetts Library System/Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners guidelines, as well as in coordination with the Mayor, the City Health Department, and other MVLC libraries.

Staff assistance was available by phone, email and chat was available 6 days and 61 hours per week, and Patio Pickup service for reserved items was available from July, 2020 through May, 2021. The Library building was open 6 days a week from August, 2020 through May, 2021 for limited browsing and by appointment for the Archival Center, public computers, printing, scanning, faxing and reader's advisory. In June, 2021 most restrictions to the building and to library services were lifted.

As a member of the Friends of the Library, you make an important contribution to the mission of the Library: *Newburyport Public Library is a community hub that inspires and empowers all to access knowledge, culture and social connections.* The NPL's recently completed annual FY21 state report gives a picture of how we carry out that mission:

- The Library building was staffed 324 days. The building was open to the public 231 days for a total of 1,814 hours.
- Over 8,000 registered borrowers made 22,631 visits inside the NPL.
- Visitors borrowed 192,242 items – from baby board books to best selling fiction to language learning CDs.
- 16,235 patrons picked up 68,593 items at our Patio Pick-up window.
- Patrons received 49,109 items from other libraries through inter-library loan and the Library sent out 33,659 items to other libraries – these items are shared with libraries across the Commonwealth as well as from other states.

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- Patrons downloaded 12,105 audio books, read 15,973 e-books and streamed 6,433 videos.
- Patrons checked out 276 museum passes, though many museums were closed or open with limitations.
- Patrons made 310 appointments to visit our Archival Center to learn about their house, find an ancestor in a local cemetery, explore family genealogy and research local history topics.
- We answered 8,707 reference questions by phone, email and online chat in the Reference Department, Children's Room and Archival Center.
- There were 1,391 uses of the public computers, with limited hours and time limits.
- More than 2,278 individuals attended our 131 adult, teen and children's programs – most of these were virtual programs.
- 516 kids and 103 teens participated in the virtual summer reading program with weekly "take and make" craft kits available at the Patio Pickup window.
- The Library did not utilize volunteers this year, other than the Friends of the Library pop-up book sale volunteers.

Along with all of the NPL staff, I want to express our gratitude to the Friends of the Newburyport Public Library for everything that they do to support this wonderful community institution. Thank you!

Giselle Stevens, Head Librarian

NPL 9/2021