



THOMASTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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www.thomastonlibrary.org

Annual Report 2014-2015

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Your Library
Informing - Engaging
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From the Director

Preserving the past - planning for the future

The responsibility of planning for the future of library services in Thomaston is upon us.

All of the stakeholders need to take an active part in determining the direction the library will need to go to continue to meet the needs of our citizenry. The often predicted death of libraries in our country due to the advances in electronic resources and the "death of reading" has simply failed to occur. Libraries continue to play a vital role in their communities in a myriad of ways.

But, like all institutions, libraries must evolve to address the current wants and needs of the people who support them. Recognizing this challenge, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation commissioned a study by the Aspen Institute entitled "Re-envisioning Public Libraries." Among the outcomes that were discovered was the need for libraries to assume the role in the preservation of the historical documents and images of their communities. Most small cities and towns in Connecticut have volunteer historical societies, usually comprised of elderly persons dedicated to keeping the history of the town intact. While hardworking and fiercely committed, they lack the training in and knowledge of modern preservation techniques. Librarians

are trained in technology and preservation techniques and are actively filling that role.

Our future plans will determine the direction of our library, and the projects it will embrace in the coming years.

Will we continue to work at preserving the history of Thomaston for the generations of Thomastonians to come? Will we strive to be the community resource that accommodates all age groups and fosters life-long learning? Will we become a "community center" that provides the space and the technological resources that allow our citizens to work collaboratively and creatively in a nurturing environment?

The task of deciding the direction of our library services is upon us. I am very excited to be a part of the discovery process of determining what our citizens want and the planning to be able to supply those services in the coming years.

"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

— Benjamin Franklin

Search "The Express" on New Digital Archive

A generous bequest from Thomaston resident Eleanor Conway has allowed the library, in cooperation with the Connecticut State Library, to offer the public an indexed digital archive of The (Thomaston) Express weekly newspaper. Phase 1 of this ongoing project currently makes available some issues from as far back as 1880 and most issues from 1922 through 1979. Phase 2 is in the works, and in early 2016 will make available most issues from 1980 to 1994. This archive can be searched using one of the library's public computers, or elsewhere

from any device with internet access. Just sign into the library's home page at thomastonlibrary.org and follow the link! The Express, no longer in publication, was for more than a century the recorder of all things local: town government; police, fire, business and real estate activity; school, church and social events; births, weddings, deaths. The ads track not only the changing (never down!) cost of products and services, but the rise, fall and rebirth of the business community. If you're looking for something specific, or just nostalgic, this archive is for you.

Teen Department



On May 29th the Teen Advisory Board, along with other library patrons, traveled to the National Book Conference “BookCon” in New York City. Several teens attended panel discussions such as “*Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* Film Panel and Cast Discussion,” “Rotten To-

matoes Critics vs. Fans” and “Best and Worst - Book to Screen Adaptations.” They also had a chance to meet some of their favorite authors including Marissa Meyers, Marie Lu, Alexandra Bracken, Gayle Forman and David Baldacci. The trip was a blast and on the way home the bus was buzzing with tales of numerous adventures and the swapping of many free books distributed throughout the event. The teens hope to attend again when BookCon returns to New York in 2017.

The Year by the Numbers

The library’s collection of materials as of June 30, 2015 is as follows:

BOOKS	2015	2014	2013	2012
Adult Books	24,087	24,382	24,308	24,320
Teen Books	1,556	1,477	1,709	1,612
Children’s Books	14,642	14,430	14,557	14,718
Subscriptions	61			
TOTAL Books	40,346	40,289	40,574	40,650
NON-BOOK items				
Audio	2,994	2,907	2,756	2,492
Video	3,647	3,418	3,212	2,940
Other	25			
eBooks	912	5,468	4,412	6,698
eAudio	2,926	2,196	4,638	3,077
TOTAL Non-Books	10,504	13,989	15,018	15,207

For 2014-15, the total circulation of all library materials was:

BOOKS & SERIALS	2014-15	2013-14
Adult	23,560	25,972
Teen	2,613	3,068
Children’s	20,946	22,212
TOTAL	47,119	51,252
AUDIO		
Adult	4,640	4,428
Teen	62	
Children’s	302	518
TOTAL	5,004	4,946

ELECTRONIC CIRCULATION	
eAudio	694
eBooks	413

VIDEO	2014-15	2013-14
Adult	13,979	16,475
Teen	4	
Children’s	4,091	3,874
TOTAL	18,074	20,349
ALL OTHER ITEMS		
Adult	221	251
TOTAL	221	251

Total Adult Circulation	42,400
Total Teen Circulation	2,679
Total Children’s Circulation	25,339
TOTAL 2014-15 CIRCULATION	70,418

Adult Programs

Programs offered by the Thomaston Public Library are varied and designed to appeal to wide audiences. Health, taxes, entertainment, finance and, of course, literature are all offered throughout the year. Some of the programs offered for adults this year are listed below:



- Book Discussions (16)
- Gardening with George (8 part series)
- Growing Fruit with George (7 part series)
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA - 198 appointments)
- The Dog Listener - Pat Wright
- Keep Debt Under Control
- Gargoyles of Yale
- Credit and Credit Scores
- Downton Abbey - Fashion and Social Change
- Creating a Wreath with Fresh Cut Greens
- Understanding Medicare
- Butterfly Gardens
- Passport to Libraries Program
- Putting Your Garden to Bed
- Ghostly Photographs

2014-15 PROGRAMMING	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS	NUMBER IN ATTENDANCE
Adult	60	737
Teen	53	416
Children’s	441	9,510
TOTAL	554	10,663

Children's Department / Sprout - Grow - Thrive

In May the Children's Library celebrated the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Laura Andrews Children's wing. Celebrations included a party with cake, balloons, photo collages and visits from friends old and new. Barbara Saska and Jane Kendrick shared stories of the opening in 1985. They served as Children's Librarian and Director, respectively, at the time of the dedication. Also celebrating a 30th anniversary was

The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me
by Roald

Dahl, the reading selection for the May Thomaston Reading Together program. Over 100 participants came in to the library to register, read along and enter the raffle. Additionally Mrs. B & Mrs. G read aloud to 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th graders during collaborative programs with the Thomaston Public Schools. More than 370 participants found themselves reading together in Thomaston! The raffle winners, the Kaoud family, went home with a 3 foot giraffe, candy from "the grubber" and a copy of the book. Join us for Reading Together in May 2016.



Barbara Saska and Jane Kendrick reminisce in the library's 30 year old children's wing.

Baby Bags had a remake this year. The new neon green bags feature a design of the Laura Andrews and Thomaston Public Library stained glass window that was installed when the



Laura Andrews Society turned the original library building over to the town in 1906. The new Baby Bags were funded by a grant from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. The contents of the bags continue to be funded by our Friends group. Many recipients of the Baby Bags attend the weekly Bouncing Babies program which has record attendance since moving from Monday to Thursday.

The public library and public schools collaborate throughout the school year to provide enriching experiences for students. Music at the Annual Children's Craft Fair was provided by volunteers from the Center School band program. Also, after a 3 year hiatus Center School 4th and 5th grade classes are again making regular visits to the library. One lucky 4th grade class had a Skype visit with author Sarah Albee.



Favorite programs in summer 2014 were Minion Camp and Mini Minion Camp where students in grades 1-6 participated in hands



on science experiments. It is hard to say what was more popular: erupting volcanoes, freezing ice cream or dripping slime. During the school year Alphabits was a clear favorite. Pictured bottom left is a tea party held on "T" day.



Community volunteers continue to donate time and talents to the library allowing the library to offer extensive services and programs. Thanks to volunteers the children's department was able to refurbish shelving

in the Enchanted Glen, offer visits with four different authors, and have a hands-on reptile program. Teen volunteers donated hours putting away books, serving ice cream, acting as movie hosts, tutoring students, and helping set up for book sales.

The children's department is grateful to those who worked so hard in the past to create a space where children can sprout, grow and thrive. As we move into the future we continue to look for new ways to engage, serve and grow our library community. We welcome your suggestions.

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The library remembers with gratitude the following deceased patrons whose families and friends generously offered memorial contributions in their honor to the Friends of the Library through June 30, 2015:

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 Dianne Martin