

**2023 TOWN OF CHESTER LIBRARY
ANNUAL REPORT LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

In 2023, 8,298 people visited our Library, an average of 160 people a week. A 13% increase in visits over 2022.

Library Collection

As regards our library collection it is currently composed of over 25,000 physical items which include fiction, non-fiction and large type books, local history and lake management books, graphic novels, audiobooks, music, DVDs, a book arts collection, sport equip, puzzles, board games, museum passes. Additionally, there are over 17,100 e-content books and audiobooks that are jointly owned by the 5 counties of libraries that make up the SALS system. All are offered for free to Library patrons with cards. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of our collection are adult items and $\frac{1}{4}$ for children.

This year we added 464, purchased and donated, items to our collection.

Circulation

In 2023 the library circulated 14,987 items, an average of 288 items per week a 7% increase over 2022.
47% of our check-outs were adult books
24% children's books
29% dvds, audiobooks, music and e-downloadable items

Programs and Collaborations

Many of our programs included collaborations with various community organizations.

For a series of Summer STEM Workshops for children we collaborated with the Chester-Horicon Youth Commission, participated in the NW School Kindergarten Round up, the YMCA summer literacy camp, preschool storytelling sessions every Fri in the Library, as well as for Head Start and the PreK class at North Warren Central School.

In addition, the library sponsored a How to Survive Your First Year in College, program for Teens of North Warren Central School. During the Summer we presented 5 family programs as well as a Summer Reading Challenge for children in collaboration with the Friends of Chester Library.

In the Ruplin gallery and display case exhibits were held monthly with Meet the Artist receptions for most of the exhibitors.

For Adults, in collaboration with the TOC Historical Society we presented 3 lectures which included the Underground Railroad in Chestertown, Haunted Saratoga with local author Joe Haedrich, and Paul Stillman as Nasty Ned an ADK Frontiersman.

The library also presented lectures for adults on wilderness skills, fishing, eclipses, and a movie on the High Cost of Fashion with Zero Waste of Warren Co.

In total we presented:

65 children's programs, with an attendance of 670;
6 Family programs with an attendance of 328;
33 presentations for Adults with an attendance of 692.

104 programs in all, with a total attendance of 1,690.

Technology

The library provides 4 desktop computers and 2 laptops for public use as well as a public use WIFI connection which is active 24 hours and available outside as well as inside the building. The Library continues to act as the tax reporting agent for the local VFW, ever since the online reporting requirement was put in place. We had 4 people use our technology to complete their professional licensing requirements which now are required to be completed online.

Our staff conducted many one-on-one digital literacy sessions showing patrons how to use email, submit job applications and unemployment filings online. We conducted 5 Tech Support Saturdays which provided community members with drop-in sessions with a computer professional to aid in any problems with mobile devices.

In 2023, 300 people used our wired library computers and there were 4,300 log-ins to our wireless services.

Other Library services which include fax, scan, copy and print were in constant use.

Free Services Provided with a Library Card

The library currently has registered 1,500 people with library cards, 133 of which are non-residents. One of the services these cards give our patrons are the use of the Patron Access Catalog (PAC). This is an online catalogue that allows patrons to review their accounts, renew items, browse and order from the collections of all the libraries within the Southern Adirondack (SALS) and Mohawk Valley Library Systems (MVLS). Requested items can be delivered to the patron's library of choice for pick up.

Part of the monthly Automation fees we pay to the SALS covers this Inter-library loan delivery system. In 2023, 3,894 items from our collection were sent through inter-library loan to patrons of other libraries.

Our patrons, through inter-library loan borrowed 2,371 items from other libraries. We receive ILL deliveries three times a week.

Hoopla is another service which is free to cardholders in the Town of Chester. Hoopla is a streaming service which provides downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, movies, music, comics, graphic novels, magazines and master classes on various topics. Last year, over 1,000 items were checked out by Chestertown Patrons. This service is sponsored by Friends of Chester Library.

Another free service for card holders is Overdrive/Libby. This service provides free downloadable audio and e-books. 2023 saw 1,724 check outs in Chester alone. All content for this program is jointly held by all libraries in SALS and MVLS. Each library contributes to the purchase of these items based on a percentage of what they spent on their collection the previous year.

Facility

In 2023, SALS provided us with an updated wireless router with a broader range which significantly increased the speed and reach of our wireless system. In March of 2023 the installation of the new windows in the adult sitting area of the library was completed. Repair of the windows in the Children's area was also completed in August, as was the cleaning of rugs and repair and painting of walls.

Respectfully submitted,
Alma Alvarez, Director
Town of Chester Public Library