

Lawrence Library 2023 Town Report



In 2023, library usage was back to pre-Covid numbers. The library continued to provide free masks and Covid test kits (as available through Nashoba Board of Health) to the public throughout the year. It was a very busy year with programs and staff changes.

The library remained open 6 days a week, thanks to the passage of the warrant request to fund Monday hours at Spring Town Meeting. That allowed us to resume service 6 days a week, and stay open 4 evenings until 8:30 pm. Our popular Curbside Pickup option will remain a permanent opt-in service.

In addition to the 72,000+ physical items one may borrow from the library, we offer [eBook and digital audiobooks](#), [streaming movies and TV](#), as well as [research databases and online language learning](#). WiFi remains available outside the library, 24/7. The library also has six

T-Mobile HotSpots available to borrow. These provide patrons/students with internet connectivity from at home, away on business or vacation, or on the road.

In the fall, we added [Niche Academy](#), an online learning platform with free video tutorials. The library continues to offer [NuWav Legal Documents](#), [Global Road Warrior](#), and [Transparent Language](#), plus three genealogy resources: Ancestry, American Ancestors, and FamilySearch. For children, we have interactive ebooks from [TumbleBooks](#) and educational activities from [Educate Station](#). All online services can be accessed remotely 24/7 (except the genealogy resources, which are restricted to in-library usage). Our monthly newsletters are emailed to over 2,260 people, with open rates significantly higher than industry average. The usage of our [website](#) remained strong in 2023.

It was a busy year for adult, teen, and children's programming. The library offered **944** in-person programs. Additionally, the library provided meeting room space for **453** non-library meetings, more than double 2022 usage.

Thanks to the support of the Pepperell Cultural Council, we were able to use grant funding to offer the following programs: The Michelle Tucker Jazz Quintet, Hungrytown Concert, Ukulele workshop, Wingmasters: Birds of Prey, The Fright Before Christmas, Soaring with Christa, Animal Adaptations, Crafts with Mandy, Flower Arranging, and Summer STEAM Club.



Other event/program highlights for the year:

- For children - Ms. Shannon and Ms. Alyssa offered 279 programs (40% increase) for our younger patrons including: Baby Time Mondays, Bubble Blast, Summer Reading, Kindergarten Tours, Paint Night for Kids, Nature Walks, Lego Club, Magic Tree House Book Club, numerous craft programs, Read to Ronin, Yoga for Kids, Kids STEAM Club and more!
- For teens - Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournaments, Do Us a Flavor international snacks and trivia, Movie Nights, Drop in Gaming, Dungeons & Dragons, Beyond Basics Tie-Dye, Gingerbread Decorating, and various crafts.
- For adults - weekly: Bridge Club, Meditation, Mahjong, Cribbage, and Qigong; monthly: Adult Book Club, Senior Book Club, Cookbook Club, and Historical Fiction Book Club, Spice of the Month, and Writers Group. Some of the other programs offered were Relax with Therapy Dog Ronin; ESL Conversation Group, Living Art of Violin Playing, Botanical Stenciling, Paranormal Hotspots with Ronny LeBlanc, Felting Workshop, Searching for



William Prescott: Stalwart of Bunker Hill, the Seed Collective, various adult crafts, and the annual Earth Day Celebration and Pepperell Green Up.



- For all ages: Annual Holiday Gingerbread contest, Paw Print Christmas Ornaments, 2 Puzzle Swaps, Tie Dye and Henna Party, and the Friends Annual Tree Lighting were offered in addition to our monthly art and music venues.
- In The Gallery: The Art Gallery hosts monthly exhibits. In 2023, we hosted: Judy Bennett (watercolors), Megan Carty (sculptural abstract landscape paintings), Books in Bloom, Squanicook Colonial Quilt Guild, Nashoba Valley Artists Guild, Chris Holt & Sue Edwards (mixed media), Pepperell Student Art Show (K-12), Maureen DeSisto (acrylic landscapes), Donna Tully (hooked rugs), and Diane Davis (photography).

Monthly Open Mic Nights and concerts were in full swing with the popular Bootscam, JiveKats, The Rakes, HungryTown, Michelle Tucker Jazz Quintet, Hot Club of Pepperell, Scott Matsumoto, Gladius, and Jeff Snow Celtic Holiday. All concerts stream live and are recorded by [Pepperell Community Media](#). Sign up to receive the monthly [music newsletter](#).

The library continues to partner with the Friends of the Lawrence Library and our local food pantry, PACH, to offer Books to Keep and a Little Free Library. In the spring, the library Seed Collective provided over 650 free flower and vegetable seed packets to patrons, along with planting and seed harvesting information. We also hosted various gardening programs.

The Lawrence Library stays in touch on social media, with a presence on [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#), [Instagram](#). All music performances and artist receptions are recorded by the Pepperell Community Media and can be [viewed](#) 24/7.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Lawrence Library: Year round exhibits continue in the Art Gallery. Videos with interviews of the artists and an overview of their work are available to stream online.

The Friends kicked off 2023 with a very successful Pie Sale Fundraiser, followed by the Annual Book Sale, Library Giving Day, Toy Yard Sale, Fall Bulb Sale, Wine Tasting, Puzzle Sale, and the annual [Holiday Tree Lighting with Santa](#).

These fundraising events, plus membership dues, enable the Friends to fund for our library programs (95%), 21 museum passes, the monthly electronic [newsletters](#), numerous craft programs, the annual Holiday Tree Lighting and so much more. Their dedication, contributions, and support are much needed and always greatly appreciated!

The library had some staff turnover in 2023. We welcomed 2 new circulation assistants, Laurie Cesati and Rachel Antonopoulos.

The library is open 53 hours a week, six days a week, Monday through Saturday, including 4 evenings Monday through Thursday until 8:30 pm, Fridays 10 am - 5 pm and Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm. The Monday hours were made possible at the Spring Town Meeting (2023) with funding from a warrant article. To ensure Monday hours continue after July 1, 2024, the library is requesting a FY 2025 budget increase to permanently fund our hours of service to the community.

Watch for the always changing ‘Tale Trail’ story boards on the Greens Brook handicap accessible trail located behind the library. The library will continue to work to engage with and meet the community needs while meeting the state minimum funding requirements for state aid and library certification in FY24.

On behalf of the staff, the Library Board of Trustees, and the Friends of the Library, thank you, Pepperell, for your support. If you don't have a library card, apply online or to stop by for one – it's **FREE** and a great way to help stretch your budget! We hope to see you soon.

**Current
Library Hours:**

Opt-in Curbside Pickup:

Monday	10-8:30	24/7
Tuesday	10-8:30	
Wednesday	10-8:30	
Thursday	10-8:30	
Friday	10-5	
Saturday	10-2	

Did you know? The library offers free WiFi 24/7 as well as WiFi hotspots to borrow. Additional services include faxing, color and black and white copying/printing, and document scanning for a nominal fee.

Financial and Service Benefits of the Lawrence Library to the Community ~ January 1 - December 31, 2023:

- **\$195,154** - the value of all materials borrowed; **\$2,439,963.00** reflects the value of programs, computer and Wi-Fi usage, museum passes, online databases, and reference assistance, a **380% Return on Investment (ROI)**
- **75,979 items** were borrowed/loaned (up 10%); **18,612** Inter Library Loans (8,438 borrowed, 10,174 loaned); **22,901** eBooks (up 3%)
- **6,835** patrons with active library cards, **512** new patrons
- Open **2,756** hours – **53** service hours open **6** days a week, including **4 nights** until 8:30 pm
- Building usage: **1,447** all meetings ~ library and non-library; (17,644 attendance), foot traffic: **40,560+**
- Meeting Room: **453** non-library meetings ~ 51% increase (approximately **3,000** attendance)
- Library Sponsored Programs: **944**, attendance **14,594**
- Total of **11** library staff (plus one 10 hour/week custodian) FTE: **7.67**
- **Over 500,000** web site visits; 26,074 new users (This is our first full year with our new web page and new data analytic.)

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Spratt, Director
On Behalf of the Library Board of Trustees

What's your library worth to you? Massachusetts Library Association has an online Library Service Calculator (<http://www.ilovelibraries.org/what-libraries-do/calculator>), which lets you determine the value of services/savings your library provides to you. Try this calculator and see what you'll save in just one month.

The **Library Board of Trustees** meet monthly, generally on the first Wednesday at 7 PM. All are welcome to attend.