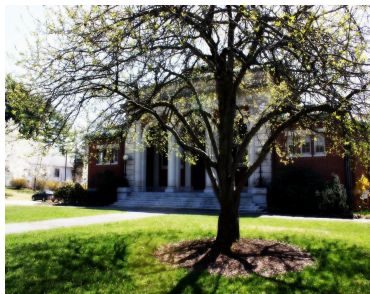


## Lawrence Library 2024 Town Report



2024 was a busy year with over 1,460 library and community programs and meetings. The budget uncertainty in the spring led to some staff turnover. We lost 3 part time employees and then welcomed 2 new library assistants, Abigail Goewey, Youth Services, and Cassidy Wenstrom, Circulation.

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 funding for Monday hours was restored at the Spring Town Meeting (2024) with a motion from the floor.

In addition to providing traditional print materials, DVDs, and audiobook and music CDs, the Lawrence Library offers [eBooks and digital audiobooks](#), [streaming movies and TV](#), [as well as research databases and online language learning](#). WiFi is available outside the library 24/7. The library's six T-Mobile HotSpots, available to borrow, provide patrons/students with internet connectivity at home, away on business or vacation, or on the road.

In the fall, we added the popular [Consumer Reports](#) as an online resource. The library continues to offer [Kanopy](#), [Overdrive](#), [Transparent Language](#), plus three genealogy resources: Ancestry, American Ancestors, and FamilySearch. For children, we have [Pebble Go](#). 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 2,375 people, with a 54% open rates. The usage of our [website](#) remained strong in 2024 with over 62,000 views.

It was a busy year for adult, teen, and children's programming. The library offered **804** in-person programs. Additionally, the library provided meeting room space for **508** non-library meetings.



Thanks to the support of the Pepperell Cultural Council, we were able to use grant funding to offer the following programs: Country Music with Matt York, a 3-part Rug Hooking workshop, Spring Equinox Henna, Succulent Nightlights for Teens, two Pop Up Art School classes, the Pepperell Classical Music series, Pottery Painting, and Jeff Snow's Celtic concert.

Other event/program highlights for the year:

- For children – In the summer, the Children's department hosted a highly successful Summer Reading Program that captivated both children and adults in the community, with a variety of themed events and interactive story times. The program encouraged participants of all ages to explore new books and develop a love for reading. A special guest author visit, science programs, pottery painting, fun prizes, and a welcoming environment created a memorable experience!

A series of live animal visits were a huge hit with visitors of all ages. Attendees had the chance to meet and interact with a variety of animals, including fluffy rabbits, curious guinea pigs, adorable hedgehogs, and of course, Read to Ronin. The animals were a big draw, giving kids and adults alike the chance to learn more about these creatures up close and personal. They were fun, educational experiences that brought a little extra excitement to the library.



- For teens - Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournaments, Do Us a Flavor: international snacks and trivia, Bubble Tea Key Chains, Oreo Taste Test, Gingerbread Houses with Mandy, Bedazzled Nutcrackers, Dungeons & Dragons, Teen & Tween Game Night, Teen Paint & Sip, Tweens' Art Club: Paint By #, Tween & Teen Baking Club

- For adults - weekly: Bridge Club, Meditation, Mahjong, and Cribbage; monthly: Adult

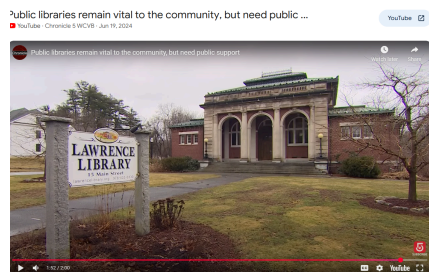
Book Club, Senior Book Club, Cookbook Club, and Historical Fiction Book Club, Spice of the Month, and Writers Group. Some of the other programs offered were Relax or Read with Therapy Dog Ronin; Winter Seed Sowing, Snowflake Luminaries, Rug Hooking Workshop with Donna Tully, Women's History Month Period Project, Seed Collective, Spring Votive Holders Craft Night, Pollinator Hydration Station, Pet Painting and Pumpkin Carving Take & Make, Fabric Pinecone Ornament various adult crafts, the annual Earth Day Celebration, and the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Pepperell Green Up.

- For all ages: All Hello's Eve, Paw Print Christmas Ornaments, 2 Puzzle Swaps, Tie Dye and Henna Party, several Take and Make crafts, 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 2024, we hosted: Sue Edwards (Loving a Leek; the art & science of the soil biome), Norman Bedard (bird photography), the Squanicook Colonial Quilt Guild, Sharon Chandler Correnty & Jon Caterina (Cotton & Wool; fiber, sculpture, and mixed media), Judy Bennet (plein-air watercolors), Student Art (K-12), Jeff Kubick (nature photography), Pam Boivin (American West and local nature photography), and a Pet Art show! Interviews with the artists, and a look at their exhibits, are available to stream via [Pepperell Community Media](#). Opening receptions for the artists are funded by the Friends of the Library.
- Monthly Open Mic Nights and concerts were in full swing with the popular Shakedown Station, Rakes, Alex Minasian Jazz Trio, Vanessa & Seamus, Matt York, Alec Sullivan and Wintersong. There were five classical music concerts: Pepperell Classical Concerts 3-part series, Nissitissit String Quartet, and Joe Clark. All concerts stream live, and are recorded by Pepperell [Community Media](#). Sign up to receive the [monthly newsletter](#) which includes the music concerts.

Community Preservation funding for the library included money to be held in escrow for future mortar restoration (two additional grants are pending) and for the preservation/restoration of the library's portico oak doors. The double front doors were completed in the fall, and the two side doors will be finished in the spring of 2025.



The library completed a digitization project for our local newspaper holdings from 1899-2021 (2022-2024 coming soon). We are now working on ways to make access as easy as possible for patrons. Additionally, thanks to the work of volunteer Ron Karr, all of our photographs and postcards from the History Room collection are now accessible through the [Digital Commonwealth](#).



In June, the Lawrence Library was one of a handful of the 369 public libraries in Massachusetts that were featured by Ted Reinstein in [Boston Chronicle: Libraries Are Evolving](#).

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 which are restocked by volunteer Ame Fountain. In the spring, the library Seed Collective organized and managed by Sherrill Burgess provided over 1,000 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](#) and [Instagram](#).

### **Sponsored by the Friends of the Lawrence Library:**

The Friends kicked off 2024 with another very successful Pie Sale fundraiser, followed by the Annual Book Sale, Library Giving Day, Toy Yard Sale, Fall Bulb Sale, two Puzzle Sales, and the annual [Holiday Tree Lighting with Santa](#).

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

Come explore and enjoy the Greens Brook Trail located behind the library and our Pocket Pollinator & [Monarch Waystation](#) Garden. Watch for the always changing ‘Tale Trail’ storyboards on the Greens Brook accessible trail. 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 FY25.

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.

**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, 2024

- **\$2,600,000.00** reflects the value of materials circulated, programs, computer and Wi-Fi usage, museum passes, online databases, and reference assistance, a **400% Return on Investment (ROI)**
- **78,743 items** were borrowed/loaned, **19,017** Inter Library Loans (9,617 borrowed, 11,173 loaned); **23,001** eBooks
- If you stacked all the books checked out at the library it would **reach .9 miles**, or in New England terms **11,000** medium **Dunkin’** coffee cups!
- **5,140** patrons with active library cards
- Open **2,756** hours: **53** weekly service hours, open **6** days a week, including **4 nights** until 8:30 pm
- Building usage: **1,460** total meetings (library and non-library, **17,895** attendance), foot traffic: **42,560+**
- Meeting Room: **508** non-library meetings (approximately **3,500** attendance)
- Library Sponsored Programs: **804**, attendance **13,060**
- Total of **11** library staff (plus one 10 hour/week custodian) FTE: **7.72**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the community of Pepperell. I will be retiring at the end of June 2025. It has been my great pleasure and honor to serve Pepperell as your Library Director for 19 years. Thank you for your continued and unwavering support of the Lawrence Library and staff.

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

The [Library Board of Trustees](#) meets monthly, generally on the first Wednesday at 7 PM. All are welcome to attend. The Trustees recently approved the [Lawrence Library Long Range Plan FY 2025 - 2028](#) (with appendixes [A](#), [B](#), [C](#), and [D](#)).