

# REPORT OF THE AVON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

GLENN GRUBE, *Library Director*

This year at the library seemed like two very distinct years. There was July 2019 through February 2020, during which the library, partnered with the Avon Historical Society, launched a year-long celebration of women's suffrage, people packed the parking lot and community room eager to attend programs for children and families, and staff traveled to take part in library conferences across the Northeast and as far away as Nashville. Then there was March onward, where our service model pivoted to online programming, virtual meetings, and contactless curbside pickup of books and other library materials, as we worked to help minimize community transmission of the novel coronavirus.

A donation of a parlor grand piano to the library in the summer of 2019 offered a great new opportunity for children's programming. The Kawai piano, generously donated by the Toyen Family, sits in the middle of the children's floor and is the centerpiece of the *Do, Re, (You & Me)* music program for young children and their caregivers. The piano was also used for community concerts, where local musicians of all ages and skill levels could sign up to perform for a crowd of enthusiastic families.

*Deeds Not Words: 100 Years of the Vote for Women* was a collaborative project between the Avon Free Public Library, the Avon Historical Society, and the Avon Senior Center. The programming series encompassed a gallery exhibit and more than a dozen events, including lectures, films, field trips, and dramatic performances, spread out over many months, with financial support provided by CT Humanities. While the series was intended to be in-person throughout the year, the final programs were moved to an online format after the library closed to the public due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Transitioning from being a busy, public building with hundreds of visitors per day to a provider of largely electronic and virtual services was difficult, but much progress was made between March 15, our last day open to the public, and the end of the year.

The library's 3D printers were used to fabricate personal protective equipment, including face shields and mask extenders. After hearing about the shortage of PPE early in the crisis, the library was able to use design documents found online and filament we had in stock for our 3D printers to begin producing PPE. Initially, this was distributed to the Avon Police Department for use by local first responders, and then subsequent batches of PPE were distributed by Avon's Emergency Operations Coordinator and the Farmington Valley Health District to assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and medical practices in the area.

While e-books and other electronic content had always been a part of the library's collection, the shutdown made such resources even more valuable. More than \$20,000 was shifted into the budget for acquiring new e-content, and 400+ new users signed up to access books, magazines, and streaming video online. This led to a 75% increase in downloadable circulation for the final quarter of the year.

Since many still prefer to read physical books, or may not have easy access to devices or a reliable internet connection, the library began offering contactless curbside pickup of physical library materials in May. This program proved incredibly popular, averaging over 1,200 pickup appointment per month.

Programming has always been the core of what Avon Library does and staff quickly learned how to shift programs originally planned to be in-person to an online venue. Author talks and lectures were delivered by Zoom, podcasts were recorded with staff reading stories and fables, and reader's advisory that would have taken place in the library and the public schools was recorded and uploaded to YouTube.

While we learned a great deal about recording, streaming, and Zooming this year, we cannot wait to see you all back inside the library in 2021!

LIBRARY STATISTICS			
Library Use	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	FY 19/20
Resident Card Holders	7,948	7,769	8,257
% of Population	43%	42%	45%
Library Visits (door count)*	156,275	156,168	125,605
Visits per capita	8.5	8.5	6.8
<b>Circulation</b>			
Adult Collection	108,425	104,549	85,304
Children's Collection	115,512	109,474	85,334
Young Adult Collection	16,453	17,557	15,659
Downloadable Collection**	18,334	23,738	31,297
Total	258,724	255,318	217,594
Circulation per capita	14.1	13.9	11.9
<b>Programs &amp; Services</b>			
Library Programs***	1,128	1,157	1,032
Program Attendance***	39,044	34,663	30,182
Reference Questions	30,809	31,074	21,174
Internet Usage*	27,260	26,556	19,162
Database Searches	83,340	94,212	75,012
Website Visits****	197,769	92,586	100,776
<b>Library Collection</b>			
Print Collection	103,019	100,390	98,456
Non-print Collection	91,708	95,247	92,539
<b>Added to the Collection</b>			
Print Collection	9,480	8,537	7,039
Non-print Collection	78,625	12,167	13,513
Magazine Subscriptions- <i>includes digital titles</i>	230	217	214

\*Closed to the public from March 15-June 30 due to Covid-19

\*\*Total includes downloads of e-books, e-audio, streaming video and digital magazines for all age levels.

\*\*\*Includes online programs and attendees

\*\*\*\*A change in how we collect website statistics eliminated visits from indexing bots from this total beginning in 2018/19.