

2021 - 2022

LIBRARY
PERSONNEL
ANNUAL REPORT



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40 DAYS OF
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The past year, 2021, has proved just as challenging as 2020, if not more so as the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to test our patience and mettle. I am proud to report, however, that Thomaston Public Library's staff has risen to every challenge and continued to provide services to the community in the safest ways possible.

40 Days of Summer had another very successful year in 2021, and we were thrilled to return to a few in-person activities as we welcomed back presenters such as author Katie Coppens, Sparks' Ark wildlife experts, Chewonki Foundation, and local science and rocket enthusiast Ted Mahler. These events were the highlight of the summer, but more importantly, we handed out an incredible total of 2,468 meals, along with 1,073 take-home projects of crafts, science experiments, and games. That's an average of 25 kids served two meals and an activity each day for ten weeks - two additional weeks than in 2020! We are hard at work preparing for our ninth annual 40 Days of Summer in 2022 and are hoping to finally return to mostly in-person activities.

We are also delighted to continue offering many activities that families can do at home throughout the school year, including a different take-and-make project each week, with thanks to a grant from The Anonimo Foundation; Nature Explorer Backpacks from Maine Audubon; and our Astronomy Discovery kit and telescope from Cornerstones of Science!

The Library is addressing food insecurity in the community in a new way, with the launch of our "Help Yourself Shelf." Non-perishable, in-date food, personal care, and pet care items are available in our Free Room just off the elevator on the main floor - no questions asked, and no qualifications, sign-ins, or appointments needed. Take what you need, give if you can!



In September, we hosted the first Town Meet & Greet, which combined our annual fall Friends of TPL fundraiser, Chili & Chowder, Books & Bakes, with an opportunity for the community to meet and chat with the town manager, select board, and local organizations and businesses in a casual format. It was a wonderful day, despite being very humid, and though former Head Librarian and current Select Board Chair Diane Giese made twice as much chili and chowder as the previous year, we still sold out of food within an hour!

For adult programming, we launched a new book club this summer that was intended to be a limited series meeting outdoors in the warmer months to discuss light-hearted books. We were having far too much fun to stop, though, and moved indoors when it got cold and are continuing to meet. This "Pop-Up" book club is the Library's fourth, and our Intergenerational, Let's Talk About It, and Mystery book groups are all going strong with regular and enthusiastic attendance. Our twice-weekly Senior Exercise Class is also well-attended, and both programs are available virtually or in-person as the Library strives towards accessibility for all.

Our patron and papercraft enthusiast Carol Davis is starting a monthly, all-ages origami club here at the Library soon, and we are excited to see everyone's paper creations!

We also participated in the first year of the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens Library Pass Program, which gave many of our patrons a chance to visit the new Giant Trolls exhibit!

Overall, despite the challenges of the year, Thomaston Public Library continues to thrive. We are grateful to be a part of this wonderful community.

With thanks,

Caroline Ward-Nesbit
Head Librarian

Did you know that for every \$1 the town invests in Thomaston Public Library, the community gets \$7 back in value?

The Library offers not only print books, audiobooks, ebooks, DVDs, and museum passes to borrow, but also a wide variety of community programs, meeting room space, public access computers, tech assistance, research help, and so much more!

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