

SEEKONK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 2020





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Seekonk Public Library, like all public libraries, has faced unprecedented challenges since our abrupt closure to the public on March 17 due to COVID-19. While initial expectations were that the closure would last a few weeks, we soon realized that we would in fact remain closed far beyond that time frame. Our mission is to provide access to information. Our challenge was to provide that information not only electronically, but remotely, as the library building was closed to public and staff.

Our library team met that goal head on by adapting existing programs to a virtual environment.

Our services continue to evolve. We initiated curbside pickup to provide a safe, contactless means of distributing library material. Our summer reading program for children and teens was entirely virtual. We continue to adapt to serve our community. We are grateful to a community who adapted with us. I am proud to say we will move forward together.

Kate Hibbert

KATHLEEN HIBBERT

Seekonk Public Library, Director

SPL Library By The Numbers

FY20 Snapshot

Total items lent: 248,027

Total Hours Open: 2127

Total Visits to the Library: 65,365

Total Curbside Pickups: 876

Active library cardholders: 4707

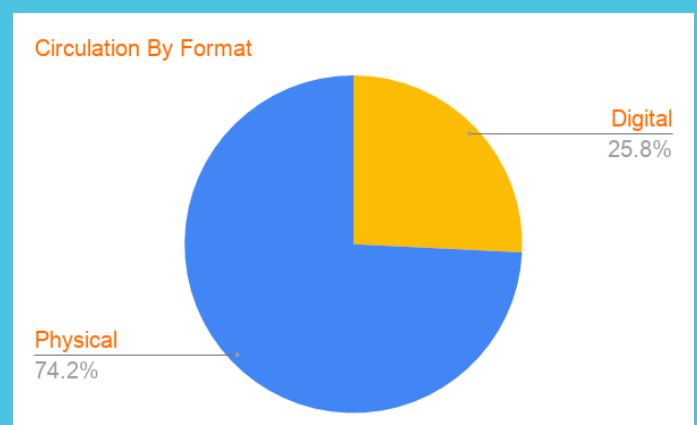
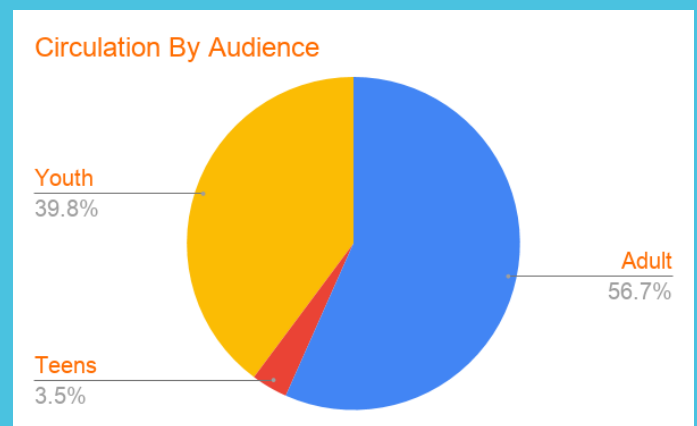
New library cards issued: 669

Total reference questions: 8335

Total Meeting Room Use: 445

Total Attendance at Youth Programs:
5835

Total attendance at Adult & Teen
Programs: 1066



Mission Statement

The mission of the Seekonk Public Library is to enrich lives by ensuring that every member of the community has access to a vast array of ideas and information.

What We Do

The Library enriches lives, broadens horizons, and strengthens community.



Building

The library continues to operate from our location at 410 Newman Avenue. The current library building was constructed in 1978. The building infrastructure is facing costly repairs. The HVAC system, as well as much of the electrical system, is at its end of life. The public restrooms are also original, appear run-down, and emit consistent odors despite daily cleaning. The original carpet still remains in the main part of the building. The windows are not energy efficient, and due to some settling of the building, are “racked” and no longer weather tight.

Recognizing the need for repairs, as well as inadequate space for the programs and services desired by the community, in 2017 Library Administration applied to the Commonwealth’s Construction Grant Program as administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The library was tentatively awarded a grant of \$7.3 million dollars to cover 48% of projected construction costs, and is currently in seventh place on the waiting list for funding. The library anticipates funding to become available in FY23. The Board of Library Trustees is working with an ad hoc coalition of non-profit organizations, private citizens, and other stakeholders to coordinate fundraising and public support for the project.



Seekonk Meadows

The Seekonk Meadows is a local jewel and a well used resource in the area. Many dedicated citizens worked to transform this space from landfill to passive recreation area, resulting in the opening of the Meadows to the public in 2012. The Meadows is a 9 acre site comprised of walking trails, amphitheater, and native plants and wildlife, and is adjacent to the 60 acre Gammino Pond Conservation Area.

This past year, the Meadows served as a much needed open-air community space in which residents could safely practice social distancing while enjoying the physical and mental health benefits that fresh air and nature provide.

Additionally, the Meadows was host to a variety of library programming such as Nature Walks, Story Walks, Walk and Talk Book Club, Stroller Fitness, and concerts.

Traditionally, private gatherings under 30 are allowed, and this year events included a wedding and a birthday party.



Events

The library provides high quality programming for the intellectual and educational enrichment of the community.

Highlights included:

Fused Glass Workshop
Ukulele Player's Circle
Winter in New England Colonial
Teatime
Hank Phillippi Ryan author visit
Pete Seeger Singalong
Dublin in Song & Story
Organizing Series

Lapsit Storytime
Toddler Storytime
BeyBlade Club
Family Movie Matinees
Mystic Aquarium's "Suitcase of Surprises"
Mystic Aquarium's "Eat or Be Eaten"
Library LEGO Mania





Outreach & Collaboration

The library is an active participant in the community, and always willing to collaborate with other organizations and municipal departments for the benefit of the community.

Highlights included:

Aitken Elementary School PTO “Flames of Fall”

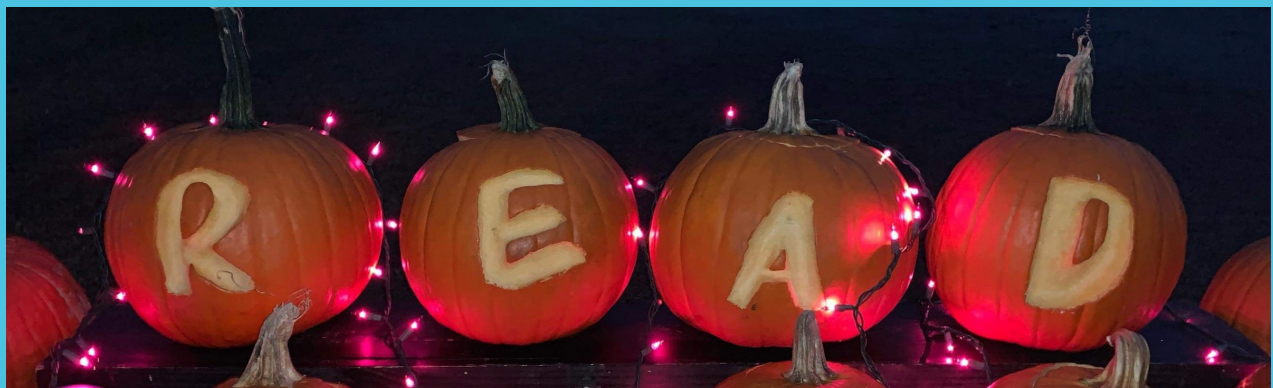
Martin Elementary School “Pumpkin Somethin’ ”

Seekonk Small Business Expo

Gammino Pond Ribbon Cutting Celebration

Seekonk Public Schools Classroom Visits

Seekonk Recreation Department “Trunk or Treat”



Seekonk Library contribution to Flames of Fall, Mildred H. Aitken Elementary School PTO
October 2019

Our partners include:

- Angel's Care Closet
- CFCE & AHS Early Intervention
- Civil Air Patrol
- Friends of the Seekonk Public Library
- PACE ChildCare Works
- Seekonk Conservation Commission
- Seekonk Health Department
- Seekonk Human Services
- Seekonk Public Schools
- Seekonk Recycling Committee
- Sturdy Memorial Hospital



Seekonk Small Business Expo
January 2020



Gammino Pond Ribbon Cutting Celebration
November 2019

COVID-19

COVID-19 changed our landscape dramatically. Our library team met that goal head on by adapting existing programs to a virtual environment. We created virtual storytimes for our youngest patrons, carefully navigating copyright law and publisher restrictions on usage. We developed new programs (virtual computer help, online trivia nights, virtual author discussions) to serve a community under stay-at home orders. We added online tutorials for our users who needed to learn how to use Zoom, Facebook, and other virtual networking sites. We published a curated list of resources for small businesses impacted by closures. We purchased additional eBooks and eAudiobooks for our digital collections. We expanded our streaming capabilities by subscribing to Kanopy - a film streaming resource. We added a weekly themed newsletter to highlight items available for digital borrowing, particularly those items that could be borrowed immediately, with no waiting period. We instituted a "Curbside Pickup" program. We listened to our residents' needs and responded.

"This was the best phone call I could have received that my library was open again. Got my books, I am a happy reader again. Thanks for all the work you do."

Patron email to the library upon hearing of the library's curbside pickup service, June 2020



Volunteers

The library appreciates the efforts of the many volunteers who contribute to its success. The Friends of the Library support the library through ongoing book sales and raffles throughout the year. Our lobby "greeters" are an integral part of the welcoming atmosphere as you enter the library. Forty volunteers donated 2775 hours to the library in FY20. The Friends of the Library's efforts helped to sponsor both Adult and Youth Services programming, as well as several museum pass subscriptions. The funds provided by the Friends of the Library supplement the services sustained by tax dollars. While COVID-19 safety standards have necessitated a suspension of the lobby sale and a cancellation of our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event, we look forward to the day we can welcome our volunteers back into the building.



Friends of the Library
Lobby and Book Sale Volunteers

Technology

The library continues to enhance its reputation as a leader in innovative library service. Our mobile hotspot lending program proved so successful, that in FY 20, we added additional hotspots to the collection. These hotspots proved invaluable to residents during the months of our statewide “stay-at-home” order.

The library reached Phase IV of our RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) project and completed the installation of a RFID enabled gate system that provided both security and inventory control.

By following a robust technology maintenance plan, we ensure that our patrons receive access to high quality services and technology training.

The library also debuted a new [website](#) in FY2020, allowing users to find the information they need in a bright and engaging format. The site is intuitive, easy to navigate, and responsive.



RFID Gates, Installed September 2019

Library of Things

Did you know?



You can borrow a hotspot!



Did you know?



We offer notary services!



Did you know?



You can borrow a ukulele!



Did you know?



You can borrow video games!



Did you know?



You can stream Movies & TV Shows!



Board of Library Trustees

"The mission of the Seekonk Public library is to enrich lives by ensuring that every member of the community has access to a vast array of ideas and information."

We welcome input from the community. Please contact us at trustees@seekonkplorg.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Durkay, Chair
Sharon Connors, Vice-Chair
Alyssa Richard, Secretary
Ann Caldwell
Catherine Capello
Cynthia Corbett
Fred Slemon

