

REPORT OF THE AVON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

GLENN GRUBE, *Library Director*

Avon Free Public Library was able to hire a new part-time reference librarian, Barbara Greenleaf, this year. This is the first new position added at the library in over five years, when we hired a teen librarian after the 2012 expansion added a Teen Room to the library. One extra position made a world of difference, allowing the reference and adult services staff to take a much more active role in the Marian Hunter History Room. Following up on a Preservation Assessment Report prepared by a professional archivist in early 2016, staff have updated the processes and procedures used to acquire, catalog, preserve and make available to researchers and others the content of the Library's local history collection. The State Library's Traveling Archivist program made a visit to the history room to consult with our staff on progress, and Town Historian Nora Howard donated a collection of her research materials to us for storage and preservation.

Another big project for 2016 was the Avon Reads: One Book programming series on The Wright Brothers by David McCullough. More than 1,300 people attended dozens of lectures, programs and other events on topics and themes explored in this fascinating book. This Avon Reads: One Book series included the Library's first ever bus trip (to the New England Air Museum, co-sponsored by the Avon Senior Center) and a community build project that saw volunteers of all ages working together to complete a ¼ scale model of the Wright Brother's 1903 glider. This model is now displayed in the Library.

The Library's Farmers Market continued to draw steady crowds in its third year, and we were thrilled to welcome our 15,000th Market customer to the 2016 Holiday market in November. Our normal Market schedule is to hold 8 or 9 markets in July and August and then a single holiday market just before Thanksgiving.

Of course, in addition to looking back, Avon Library looked forward as well, starting several exciting new projects. The White Room, a digital collaborative space, was formally opened and advertised this year, with an introductory video produced by Technology Librarian Jessica Palmer. That video won a Connecticut Library Association publicity award, and the room itself has been well received by those who have used it.

Other new technology initiatives this year include: a digitization station, which converts analog media like video or audio cassettes, into digital files; a new 3D printer donated by the Friends of Avon Library; portable 4G hotspots for loan that let you take wifi with you when you travel; a collection of LaunchPads, age appropriate, self-contained tablets pre-loaded with educational apps for children, funded with a grant from the Avon Education Foundation,; and a subscription to Qello Concerts, a collection of over 1,700 music videos, concert films and documentaries available for streaming with an Avon library card.

Conversion of our collection to use RFID tags instead of traditional barcodes began this year. After "tagging" all circulating items in our collection with a small radio-frequency identification chip and antenna, books will be able to be checked in and out without scanning each barcode. Moving books and other materials past an RFID reader will be all that is needed to borrow or return materials, simplifying the process at our self-service kiosks and at the circulation desk.

Avon Library staff continued to demonstrate leadership and a high level of state and national visibility for the Town and the Library this year with a number of prestigious opportunities. Library Director Glenn Grube was installed as president of the Connecticut Library Association in June, just weeks after he returned from National Library Legislative Days in Washington DC where he and other Connecticut librarians met with the state's congressional delegates to lobby for continued federal support for libraries around the country. Following on

the success of our Open Art Studio and the Curiosity Creates grant that the Library received last year to support our creative programming for children, Kari Ann St. Jean (Children's & Teen Services Librarian) and Mary Fletcher (Children's Specialist) were invited to speak at the Symposium on the Future of Libraries at the American Library Association's mid-winter meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Mary also had an article published in the journal *Children & Libraries* and hopes to expand that piece into a book on inspiring artistic creativity in children. Tina Panik (Reference & Adult Services Manager) and Marisa Hicking (Teen Librarian) spoke at the New York City ComicCon, offering a presentation on how to throw a ComicCon at your library. They clearly know a thing or two about this, as the 3rd annual AvonCon drew over 1,000 attendees in April 2017.

Sadly, Avon Library lost a dedicated supporter and an enthusiastic patron this year when Library Board member Richard Bunnell passed away in May. Richard had been on the Board of Directors of Avon Free Public Library since 2015 and is sorely missed by his fellow Board members and the library staff.

LIBRARY STATISTICS			
Library Use	FY 14/15	FY 15/16	FY 16/17
Resident Card Holders	8,594	8,323	8,144
% of Population	47%	45%	44%
Library Visits (door count)	152,136	165,223	164,249
Visits per capita	8.2	8.9	9.0
Circulation			
Adult Collection	141,817	149,128	136,692
Children's Collection	121,168	122,134	117,929
Young Adult Collection	17,090	17,642	18,831
Downloadable Collection*	11,181	10,839	12,144
Total	291,256	299,743	285,596
Circulation per capita	15.77	16.23	15.58
Library Programs	1,020	1,066	1,184
Attendance	25,966	33,438	33,147
Reference Questions	29,505	26,522	30,576
Internet Usage	27,943	30,924	29,564
Database Searches**	136,777	83,856	77,253
Website Visits	158,862	150,022	141,261
Library Collection			
Print Collection	106,310	107,380	102,985
Non-print Collection***	16,057	17,392	50,977
Added to the Collection			
Print Collection	9,200	8,294	10,396
Non-print Collection	5,326	1,687	6,067
Magazine Subscriptions (includes digital titles)	307	236	201

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

**State Library budget cuts means fewer databases are available for Avon library users to search.

***Now includes count of e-books and other digital content available for download.