

## REPORT OF THE AVON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

GLENN GRUBE, *Library Director*

The 2018-2019 year at Avon Free Public Library featured many of the annual events that residents have come to expect and enjoy, along with some exciting new offerings in programs and services as well. The 5<sup>th</sup> season of the Avon Library Farmers Market brought our 25,000<sup>th</sup> customer to the market and the 5<sup>th</sup> annual AvonCon celebrated the world of Harry Potter. The perennially popular summer reading program for children and teens drew a record 1,451 registered participants who read 16,873 books between June and August 2018. These young readers were rewarded with “library loot” and prizes donated by a variety of local businesses.

Expanded library hours began, with the library open until 8:30 PM Mondays through Thursdays year-round this year, and the Library Board worked hard to implement other initiatives from the new five-year strategic plan that was released earlier in 2018. One of these new initiatives was the Board Innovation Grant, an internal grant awarded by the Library Board to library staff who want to implement a new and innovative way to improve library service. The first two grants funded provided additional resources to the Marian Hunter Local History Room and allowed for the children’s department to buy and install a literacy boat. The literacy boat is a whimsical interactive exhibit added to the preschool area that allows imaginative play while fostering reading readiness in preschool aged children.

Thanks to the generosity of the Friends of Avon Library, the computer lab received a complete refresh. Twelve new PCs were added with wireless mice and keyboards and adjustable monitors, making the space more flexible to adapt to different needs. Each PC runs Windows 10 and is loaded with productivity, design and editing software. An HTC Vive virtual reality station was installed as well.

Other new technology deployed this year include 12 iPads available for in-house use or loan, new software and hardware for our security camera network, and some major improvements to the library’s website. In addition to updating the website to WordPress 5.0, staff integrated the local history page into our main website, improved the collection and analysis of anonymized statistics related to website use, and installed a new application that simplifies the process of registering for library programs.

Avon Library and the library’s staff continue to be state and national leaders in the field and receive recognition as such. Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty nominated Avon Library for the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. While we did not win that medal, it was an honor to be nominated and Connecticut should be proud that one of the ten winners this year was the New Haven Free Public Library. Children’s Library Specialist Mary Fletcher published her first book, *The Creative Edge: Inspiring Creativity in Libraries and Beyond* in April of 2019 and Children’s and Teen Services Manager Kari Ann St. Jean presented programs at both the Connecticut Library Association’s and New England Library Association’s annual conferences.

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine awarded a \$12,500 community engagement grant to Avon Library and Avon Senior Center to present a series of programs for both Town of Avon staff and the general public. The year-long programming series, *Take Care of Yourself*, addresses mental health and wellness issues through lectures, panel discussions, virtual reality demonstrations and books and other resources added to the library’s collection. Topics covered include addiction, trauma, gender and sexuality, depression, and hoarding.

This year we also had to say goodbye to long-time Reference Librarian Patrice Celli, who retired in June. She was replaced by a familiar face when part-time librarian Anna Korkus was hired to fill that position.

LIBRARY STATISTICS			
Library Use	FY 16/17	FY 17/18	FY 18/19
Resident Card Holders	8,144	7,948	7,769
% of Population	44%	43%	42%
Library Visits (door count)	164,249	156,275	156,168
Visits per capita	9.0	8.5	8.5
<b>Circulation</b>			
Adult Collection	136,692	108,425	104,549
Children's Collection	117,929	115,512	109,474
Young Adult Collection	18,831	16,453	17,557
Downloadable Collection*	12,144	18,334	23,738
Total	285,596	258,724	255,318
Circulation per capita	15.6	14.1	13.9
<b>Programs &amp; Services</b>			
Library Programs	1,184	1,128	1,157
Program Attendance	33,147	39,044	34,663
Reference Questions	30,576	30,809	31,074
Internet Usage	29,564	27,260	26,556
Database Searches	77,253	83,340	94,212
Website Visits**	141,261	197,769	92,586
<b>Library Collection</b>			
Print Collection	102,985	103,019	100,390
Non-print Collection***	50,977	91,708	95,247
<b>Added to the Collection</b>			
Print Collection	10,396	9,480	8,537
Non-print Collection***	6,067	78,625	12,167
Magazine Subscriptions (includes digital titles)	201	230	217

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

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

\*\*\*Beginning 2017/18 this includes count of e-books and other digital content available for download.