

LIBRARY, RECREATION AND SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES OF THE LINCOLN PUBLIC LIBRARY 2020

		<u>Term Expires</u>
Jacquelin Apsler, Chair	Selectmen's Appointee	2023
Ron Chester	Self-Perpetuating	
Lucy Maulsby	School Committees' Appointee	2022
Kathleen P. Nichols	Self-Perpetuating	
Dennis Picker	Elected	2022
Peter Sugar	Self-Perpetuating	

Statistics

The library was closed from March 14 through August 30 and again from January 11 through March 7, 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Total circulation decreased in FY2020 by 47%. 77% of the items that were checked out were physical items (e.g., Books, DVDs, magazines, music CDs) and 23% were digital (e.g., eBooks, eMagazines, eAudios, and eVideos). The number of patron visits, reference questions, programs offered, and attendance at those programs decreased. Website visits increased dramatically as new online services, like curbside pickup, were offered.

	FY2019	FY2020	% Increase
Physical Circulation	151,055	75,053	-50.31%
Digital Circulation	33,244	22,226	-33.14%
Total Circulation	184,299	97,279	-47.22%
Ratio of Physical to Digital Circulation	82% : 18%	77% : 23%	5% increase of digital circulation
Hanscom AFB Circulation	1,435	1,968	37.14%
Reference Questions	9,831	7,264	-26.11%
Programs	414	308	-25.60%
Program Attendance	9,198	4,964	-46.03%
Patron Visits	84,023	61,758	-26.50%
Website Visits	285,292	893,807	213.30%

Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

At the beginning of the pandemic, people were very concerned about getting the virus from touching things. This discouraged some people from borrowing library materials. The Institute of Museum and Library Services recommended quarantining borrowed library materials after they were returned to the library for 3 days so that any Covid-19 virus would die before the materials were reshelved. Staff turned the gallery into a quarantine station for returned items. Staff started a new contactless pickup service on June 8 to keep patrons safe from Covid-19. Patrons' requests for specific titles or a selection of items chosen by staff were put outdoors for pickup then into the vestibule as winter approached. Contactless pickup is a very popular service and staff continued providing it after

the library reopened by appointment on August 31. Staff pivoted to online programming quickly. Less than a week after the library closed due to Covid-19, staff broadcast book groups and storytimes on the Internet with Zoom. As presenters who provided in-person programs at the library modified their programs for the Internet, the library offered more of their programs online.

Social Justice

The conversations about social justice, race and anti-racism, and protests that have ignited communities around the country have served as a potent reminder of the library's critical role as a source of diverse perspectives, histories, ideas, and information. To help support parents, the children's librarians created a list of books to facilitate conversations about race. For its adult patrons, the library has referenced a list of books, most of which deal with the topics of racism, anti-racism, diversity, inclusion, and equality, prepared earlier in the year for the community by the Lincoln School Committee. The library looks forward to continuing to provide resources for the community that confront the history of race in America and ways to embrace and model anti-racism. The library is actively expanding its collection and its programs to reflect a diversity of perspectives and points of view and draw attention to those resources.

Programming Highlights

The Adult Department offers four monthly book groups: Friday Morning Book Group, Mystery Mondays, Reading for Racial Justice, and "Who Picked This Book?" Club. Two of the programs that are run by volunteers (Photo Share and The Write Stuff) are continuing on Zoom. With so many meetings and programs available on Zoom, reference staff held Zoom training sessions. Other volunteer run programs (Lincoln Open Mic Acoustic, Lincoln Film Society, Lincoln Library Knitting Group, and Lincoln Jazz Jam) do not translate well on Zoom. They will restart when the country reaches herd immunity, and people are able to sit close together again, enabling the library to resume in-house programming.

The Children's Department's weekly storytime and four monthly book groups (3rd/4th Grade Book Club, 5th/6th Grade Book Club, Middle Grade Book Share, and Together Time Tales) were broadcast on Zoom. Staff outreach visits to various elementary and preschools in Lincoln were stopped during the pandemic. A new collaboration with the Lincoln GearTicks promotes their monthly STEMtastic challenges to encourage learning about a variety of engineering and science subjects. Librarians prepare a suggested list of books to help people with each challenge.

Staffing

Sadly, Bob Lager, our custodian who had worked at the library for over 24 years, died during his work shift in January 2021. He was well loved and a hard worker with very high standards. We miss him very much. Teresa Horwitz, our new bookkeeper/administrative assistant, joined the staff in December.