

Report to the Community:

Marlboro Free Library Board of Trustees Presidents Report, 2024

The Marlboro Free Library's services continue to be enjoyed and heavily utilized by our community. Library Trustees and staff were pleased the 2023 budget proposition passed, and thank those that voted to support this annual effort. The Library's updated Plan of Service, crafted with the assistance of community members who took the time to complete the recent community survey, will help guide the library as it looks toward the future, while keeping within its mission of serving as a community center for lifetime learning.

For this past year of 2023, activities overall increased. Library staff processed and completed a combined total of over 600 notaries and passport applications. The circulation of physical items increased more than 10% over the previous year, to 47,000. The early literacy 1000 Book Project circulated at a 32% increase over the previous year, with 752 borrows. Library program attendance also continues to increase, with almost 4800 people attending the Library's 323 programs in 2023.

Some recurring highlights were the annual Shredder Truck event, and a Jester Jim performance at Cluett Shantz town park, both events grow in attendance each year. Additional highlights include The Great Give Back food drive that benefitted St Mary's Food pantry, summer technology classes. The Library grew partnerships including with a local veterans group to host Vet to Vet Coffee Hour, and with the Ulster County Office of the Aging, to offer personalized Medicare enrollment for qualified residents.

A robust and diversified youth programming schedule lead to over 3200 attendees throughout the year. Families and caregivers frequently fill the children's area of the Library, with children utilizing the varied early literacy toys and manipulatives. It's easy to see the need for additional square footage, which would better accommodate the increase in visitors, and the lively interactive STEAM and early literacy play that occurs daily.

Looking forward, the Board continued to work with architectural firm, Butler Rowland and Mays, to address space issues. Attention was given to the transformation of the varied kinds of offerings and services the Library provides to the community. The Board once again received a New York State Aid for Library Construction grant award of over \$297,000. This aid will fund the reconfiguration and modernization of the circulation desk, staff workstation, and patron-facing transaction areas. In addition, a small meeting room will be created to ease the growing need for quiet study space in our open concept library, which has become increasingly abuzz with activity on any given day. This grant amount was the largest awarded in the Mid-Hudson Library System for the grant cycle.

Other funding this year for the expansion and renovation projects include an additional \$7500 from the James & Elizabeth Manion Charitable Fund, and a Friends of the library donation of \$5000. Assemblymember Jonathon Jacobson was responsible for a \$10,000 award to the Library for e-resources, ancestrylibrary.com, wifi hotspots and museum

passes, and Stewarts Shops gave the Library \$500 for summer reading craft and game kits. The Library is grateful to all the donors who continue to support the Library. Special thanks to the Friends volunteers who tirelessly support the Library through events and fundraisers

Change can come in many ways. The Library saw the retirement of long-time employees, Catherine Cosman and Diane Casullo. In honor of Diane's 49 year long employment at the Library, Diane Casullo Day was July 11. The Library welcomed new employee Lois Doirio. But no matter the changes, the Library will continue to provide the high quality of services and resources that our community expects and deserves. The Library remains a place where all of Marlborough can come, to find the information they seek, attend a program, use technology, or find entertainment. The Library would not be the great place it is without all of those who take part in making it so—thanks to the staff, the Friends, the community, and the Board.