

Medway Public Library
Director's Report
June 5, 2023

In May, patrons used curbside checkout and home delivery 64 times.

Our people counter reported that approximately 5,543 people used the library during May. Meeting rooms were used approximately 112 times during the month.

Programs in May:

- North Sea Gas (Scottish band)
- *On the Run* - Book talk with local author John Martino
- Franklin Senior Players presented three short plays, in thanks for Medway Library providing space for their rehearsals while the Franklin Senior Center was being repaired.

- In May, 364 children and teens participated in 36 library programs. These programs included:
 - Toddler Storytime
 - Toddler Jam at the Library (twice a week)
 - Preschool Storytime
 - Move, Groove and Learn
 - 1000 Books Before Kindergarten
 - PAWS to Read
 - Cosplay Club
 - Middle School Hangout
 - STEAM up your Wednesday at the Medway Library
 - Baby Chick Embryology
 - Arduino Coding & Robotics
 - Unicorn Club
 - Pride Prep
 - Teen & Tween Dungeons & Dragons

- Library Programs for Adults
 - Oh Shoot: Photo Group
 - Library Book Group
 - Adult Dungeons & Dragons
 - Medway Fiber Arts Group
 - Spring Painted Stones - Adult Acrylic Painting
 - 50+ Job Seeking Networking Group (online)

Programs in June:

- Summer Reading Kickoff
 - Summer Lunch Program
 - Pixie Making Workshop with Judy Moffat
 - Big Ryan's Tall Tales, presented in conjunction with the Walpole CFCE..
 - Toddler Storytime
 - Toddler Jam at the Library (twice a week)
 - Preschool Storytime
 - Move, Groove and Learn
 - 1000 Books Before Kindergarten
 - PAWS to Read
 - Cosplay Club
 - Middle School Hangout
 - STEAM up your Wednesday at the Medway Library
 - Baby Chick Embryology
 - Unicorn Club
 - Pride Social for Middle & High Schoolers
 - Pride Month Gaming Drop-In for Middle & High Schoolers
 - Teen & Tween Dungeons & Dragons
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- Oh Shoot: Photo Group
 - Library Book Group
 - Adult Dungeons & Dragons
 - Medway Fiber Arts Group
 - 50+ Job Seeking Networking Group (online)
 - Medway Area Rainbow Community and OUT Metrowest

Youth Services

This month was a busy one. We continued offering an early childhood program each weekday at 11, and we learned that we need consistency not only in time but in place. Moving the Toddler Jam program outside for the month of May suppressed the numbers and confused people, who, despite advertising to the contrary, arrived at the library expecting a program. We will be moving the program back into the building starting June 5, which will ideally make it easier for families to attend an early childhood program any weekday they like without having to remember if it's a park day or not. This change should also make it easier for families to attend both Toddler Jam and summer lunches on Tuesdays without having to get in the car and drive to yet another location. It is a shame that we can't take advantage of the nicer weather and get some fresh air, but the numbers don't lie. We really, really wish we had some library-adjacent outdoor space to use.

Middle School Wednesdays finished for the school year on May 31. We began with a fully structured format, transitioned to bringing out a few different activities, and learned that what

works best is one or two spotlighted activities buttressed by tried-and-true craft options and a selection of board games. Some of the most successful spotlighted activities included Bingo, shrinky dinks, and split-screen multiplayer Switch tournaments. The last session was an end-of-year celebration with frost-your-own cupcakes, and while the decorating activity didn't last all that long, we had kids hanging out and socializing in small groups beyond the end of the program. Nineteen kids showed up for the last Wednesday of the year, and we've started to see lots of these kids at other programs and using the Makerspace when it's not Wednesday. This program has paid off hugely in developing relationships with new library users and in building community with our students.

PAWS to Read continues to be a popular offering, with people signing up weeks in advance. We will be on hiatus during July and August, and will pick up again once the school year starts. Both teams currently working with us (Jan and Sprite, Karen and Harlow) are friendly and popular with children.

Unicorn Club continues its evolution. We moved it to a Monday afternoon, and will move it to a Tuesday afternoon in June (it will then go on summer hiatus, similar to PAWS to Read). It is developing to incorporate a wider age range of participants, with more middle schoolers showing interest in attending if the program is during the week in the afternoon. The format still involves crafting to a fantasy soundscape, unicorn snacks, and making kindness notes to distribute in library homebound outreach packages.

Jennifer's passive programming has changed the way families use the children's section. It is common now for children to pick out books, cruise through the sensory stations, and play with the new kitchen set before leaving. In May, the big hit was the construction-themed sensory bin. The bird writing tray was lovely as well, and the monthly story basket was Bunny's Book Club. The middle-grade room featured an investigation table with magnets and also tangrams.

In June we will be celebrating Pride Month and getting ready for summer reading. The kickoff is on June 22; in the final week of June, we will transition into summer schedule, which will involve a significant increase in programming and supporting both school and recreational summer reading, for the subsequent nine weeks.

Makerspace

In May, the Makerspace visitor count was 190 (please note, not everyone signs the guest book).

Workshops and Classes:

Our ongoing Monday night Arduino Coding and Robotics program ran for four Mondays in May (May 1, 8, 15, 22) and served 6 children and 4 mentors.

Adult Dungeons & Dragons, every Thursday, is an ongoing program with 6 participants. The DM also leads Teen and Tween Dungeons and Dragons, which is run once a month. This month's

session on May 22 had 6 participants. The youth session often enthusiastically tosses a wrench into the works of the adult session, which seems to please the DM.

The Monthly Cosplay Club session was May 13 with 6 participants, and the monthly STEAM Wednesday explored Will It Float? on May 24, with 6 participants.

The Middle School Drop off on Wednesdays (May 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 with 13, 15, 15, 13 and 19 participants, respectively) deserves special mention here. One of the activities the students have shown massive interest in doing is 3D printing. At least one of the kids has brought in a parent so both can be certified on the machine, and every Wednesday a number of kids head over to the Makerspace to design and prep their builds. Further, some of the students stay after the program ends to craft in the Makerspace.

Special workshops:

The 4-H & Medway Library Embryology program ran for 5 weeks on Tuesday afternoons (April 25 thru May 23) and had 9 participants. These children learned about the life cycle of chickens and did chicken-related crafts and learning activities while 23 fertilized chicken eggs incubated on a sewing machine table. We were all on baby chick watch at the end, and when we finally welcomed baby chicks into the world, and they were transferred from incubator to chicken pen, a lovely broody hen was brought in to mother the chicks for a week. During this week, way more than the 9 program participants enjoyed visiting the mom and chicks (both storytime groups, and Move, Groove, and Learn! took field trips to the Makerspace), and when mom and chicks went home, we missed them. We still miss them. If only we had some library-adjacent outdoor space where next year's chicks could scratch...

Other library programs using the space:

Unicorn Club meets in the Makerspace every month.

Groups & Classes Using the Makerspace:

Medway Garden Club meets in the Makerspace, and also, the Fiber Arts Group meets every other Tuesday. This group is open to anyone who likes any fiber art, regardless of level. Beginners are welcome, and should understand that one's first fiber art is not a lone hobby; rather, it is a gateway hobby that can become a lifestyle. Make sure you have room at home for a yarn stash.

Certifications:

In May, 1 patron was certified on the knitting machine and 3 patrons were certified on the 3D printer.

Equipment Use:

Of note, the middle schoolers are enjoying learning about 3D printing, and have been returning outside of their initial Wednesday afternoon forays to print 3D builds.

There are a few patrons pursuing ongoing projects with the use of our Adobe Creative Cloud software.

The projector and screen are used weekly by both the Arduino group, and also by the Middle School Wednesday program. Diane Busa continues to ensure we have a valid Crunchyroll license to show anime for the middle school fans.

We have been using the Silhouette paper cutter extensively to create (painfully cute) programming materials.

Upcoming June Programs in the Makerspace:

Pride Prep on June 1 will be an afternoon of making buttons and other pride swag. Teen and tween D&D meets on June 12, and Unicorn Club will meet on June 13. Adult D&D will continue to meet on Thursdays, and on June 23, the Makerspace will serve as part of the venue for the library's Pride Social. We are preparing a number of different Pride-related crafts. After that, the Makerspace will serve as an activity venue in conjunction with the Free Summer Lunch program, slated to start Tuesday June 27.

Meetings & Webinars in May included:

Department Managers Meeting

Zoom meetings with directors of small libraries in Massachusetts

SUP Coalition Meetings

Elected Officials are People Too: Advocacy Tips for Library Trustees, Friends, Foundations and Medway Library Staff Meeting

Meetings & Webinars in June will include:

Department Managers Meeting

Zoom meetings with directors of small libraries in Massachusetts

SUP Medway Coalition Meetings

Minuteman Library Network Membership (Directors') Committee Meeting

Minuteman Library Network Keyuser (Technology) Group Meeting

Building and Grounds

DPW is working with us in planning for possible replacement of some furniture, particularly related to replacement of some of the older Formica desks/tables. DPW is also planning to hire a company in the near future to replace the Library's front door. DPW is still working on determining the issues involved in increasing the fresh air in parts of the lower level and the impact on the Environmental Management System.

Other

The lower level was open 18 nights from 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm in March. Twenty-six individuals used computers and the Makerspace. A total of 154 people attended 21 meetings and programs after 8:00 pm.

Margaret Y. Perkins, Library Director