



NEW CITY LIBRARY

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF NEW CITY, CONGERS AND BARDONIA

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – ANNUAL 2016

The New City Library continued its commitment to providing programming and facilities that reflect the role of today's public library in the year 2016.

While concerts, book groups, and storytime programs continued to draw crowds, new types of library programs are showing promise in fulfilling the educational and cultural needs of the community. The Children's Department launched a "**1,000 Books Before Kindergarten**" program designed to encourage early literacy for our youngest patrons. Teen volunteers painted a woodlands mural in the stairwell leading to the Storytime Room that serves as a record of achievement for children participating in the program.

Passive community activities, an ongoing monthly event in the Children's Room, encouraged engagement and shared literary experiences for kids. Twenty-two volunteers worked on the **Children's Garden** to make it a welcoming spot for patrons to learn about nature or just read en plein air. **Life-Sized Games**, a Summer Reading program, were enjoyed by the both the younger set and the teens who volunteered to create and build the components needed for such favorites as Candyland, Chinese Checkers, and Connect Four. **Lego-related** programs continued to attract budding builders. Outreach programs like storytime at the **Congers Train Station** and librarian performances at **Clarkstown Preschool events** allowed the library to connect with its patrons outside the library's walls. The **Haunted Library** provided a fun and not-too-scary Halloween event for families with young ones.

Teens had the opportunity to flex their culinary skills in a **Top Chef Challenge**. A **Coding Camp** during summer break drew full attendance. A county-wide teen writing project called **Scrawl**, sponsored by the Library Association of Rockland County, attracted submissions from several Clarkstown high-school students. A **Creative Writing Club** in August was another chance for teens to develop their authorship skills. The library's teen team of book trivia experts fought valiantly in a tough **Battle of the Books** competition to secure third place.

Adult programming branched out into new avenues, also. **eBook and Digital Library Workshops** gave patrons the opportunity to drop in for assistance in downloading the library's digital offerings. Our 3D printer still draws the curious, as well as designers and tinkerers, to our **Meet the 3D Printer** programs and **Open 3D Printing Labs**. Tech instruction in the use of **Digital Cameras, Arduino Microcontrollers, and Photoshop Elements** appealed to a wide spectrum of adult patrons. **Memoir Writing, Bead weaving,**

and **Grown-Up Coloring Parties** allowed patrons an opportunity for creative outlet. An inaugural, annual February **Bakeoff** was a hit with both patrons and staff.

A **One Town, One Book** series of programs sparked significant interest in a community-wide, simultaneous reading of the nonfiction title, *Duel with the Devil: The True Story of How Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr Teamed Up to Take On America’s First Sensational Murder Mystery*. Films, lectures, and a wrap-up Skype chat with the author highlighted and enhanced the appreciation of different aspects of the book such as life in 19th-century New York, early American politics and the legal system, and crime-solving in the days before DNA.

Interest in Local History and Genealogy programs remained high in 2016. Instruction in personal **genealogical research** and programs highlighting special groups such as the **Lenape Nation** and those of **Jewish ancestry** filled the Meeting Room. An impressive database of **oral histories** continued to grow with the assistance of many volunteers. The **Share, Listen, Learn** series continued to highlight life and lives in Rockland County and was shared with senior groups outside the library, displayed at the Garnerville Arts Center, and used in Clarkstown’s 225th anniversary celebration. The program was honored with the RCLS Adult Program of the Year award in September.

Throughout 2016, the library underwent significant capital improvements to its physical structure. The final phase of the brick façade restoration project (the **installation of new sidewalk portions** near the rehabilitated brick pillar) was completed. All sections of the **parking lot** were totally refurbished and re-lined with the assistance of a library construction grant from the NYS Division of Library Development. A **new paver patio with outdoor tables** was installed in front of the building where trees were removed. **LED soffit lighting** was installed over the handicapped access ramp and totally changed the nighttime appearance and functionality of the exterior.

Upgrading technological systems and improving Internet connectivity for both patrons and staff continued as a priority. LAN switches were replaced, Wi-Fi access points were replaced with current-generation models, and the VOIP system was transferred to Optimum cable. Electrical floor receptacles were installed in the upper floor near the five study tables. A 3D “people counter” was installed at the front entrance to get a more refined estimate of visitors to the library.

The decline of circulation of physical materials with the concurrent rise in digital checkouts precipitated an **Inventory Day** which involved the closing of the library and the weeding of outdated, unused, and damaged materials. A full-weekend **Book Sale**, the first of its kind here in over a decade, was a success and will be repeated in 2017 with the help of volunteers.

The **Library Journal Design Institute** selected the library as one of its “design challenges” and provided the opportunity to consult with numerous architects in advance of tackling significant renovation issues in the coming years.

Staff participated in professional development and continuing education in order to maximize and gain new skills. **Annual professional conferences** attended include New York Library Association (NYLA), American Library Association (ALA), Library Association of Rockland County (LARC) and a library marketing conference. **Continuing education** covered topics such as management, computer troubleshooting, and training in new interlibrary loan (ILL) software.

The Critical Incident Response Team of the Clarkstown Police Department visited to talk to staff about **active shooter** situations. Several staff members attended a full-day course on **Mental Health First Aid** and shared this knowledge with their colleagues at a full staff meeting.

The **retirements** of two librarians and one full-time circulation supervisor, all three veteran staff members, occurred in 2016. A full-time **adult services librarian** joined the staff in September.

The library was represented by both staff and board members at NYLA’s annual **Library Advocacy Day** in Albany as well as at **RCLS’s Annual Legislative Breakfast** at the Bear Mountain Inn.

All told, it was another busy, productive, and accomplished year of dedicated library service to the Clarkstown community. The staff of the New City Library looks forward to a promising future of continued successes and the satisfaction of carrying out its mission of connecting people, information and ideas to promote lifelong learning, literacy development, and community involvement to improve the quality of life for its patrons.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Silver, Director
NEW CITY LIBRARY
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