



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Annual 2017

Honor the past and create the future. This popular saying might describe the New City Library's aims and successes in the year 2017.

Our past was honored and celebrated with the retirement of four veteran full-timers: Library Assistant Susan Ball of Technical Services (29 years), Librarian II Harriet Wollenberg of Adult Services (32 years), Head of Circulation Gail Seidenfrau (26 years), and Library Assistant Joanne Stein-Carella (28 years). Their library careers spanned the era that saw the migration from card to online catalog, the change from print to digital formats, the incredible shrinking reference collection, and the conversion of the public library as temple of knowledge to a lively hub of human connectivity. Our success as a community resource is due in part to staff members such as these who exhibited commitment to public service throughout their time with us.

Our future is bright and promising with the addition of several new staff who, we're sure, will continue the good work of those who have gone before them. Jennifer Embry became the newest full-time librarian in our busy Children's Department. Matthew Aull started full-time as a librarian in Adult Services. Matthew Ciuccio joined us as a full-time Library Assistant II in the newly-formed Support Services department. Heading up that new department is Mark Gervino. Lastly, the board voted to add a limited, paid internship position to assist in Local History programming.

There was a transition in the composition of the library board, as well. Joseph Reiter and Anthony Feliciano completed their second terms. Edward Bertolino and Denis O'Hanlon were elected to their positions in the December vote. Incumbent Phyllis Morena was re-elected.

The burgeoning Friends of the New City Library had a taste of success with their very first event: a community tag sale in September. Held at 9 a.m. on a Sunday morning, the tag sale occupied the entire lower parking lot and attracted vendors and shoppers of all kinds.

Credit card acceptance became available building-wide. Sirsi/Dynix's ProPay, an ILS-integrated cash drawer system, replaced the cash register at the circulation desk for collection of fines and fees in both currency and credit card form. Reconciliation of patron accounts happens immediately. Square, a credit card processing and point-of-sale system, was installed at the adult reference desk to handle payments for patron printing.

Library programming hit its zenith with the solar eclipse viewing event in August. Over 500 patrons visited the library to experience this extraordinary celestial event firsthand

with the aid of special glasses provided by the library or to watch it in air-conditioned comfort on the big screen in the meeting room. The front lawn was a scene of anticipation and awe as families and friends came out to share the experience.

A book sale in April, stocked by patron donations, challenged the library and staff in terms of space and manpower as we attempted to manage a plethora of books beyond our wildest anticipation. Adult volunteers helped us to a great extent.

The annual Big Band Memorial Day concert featured a dedication of the new patio. County Executive Ed Day and Clarkstown Supervisor George Hoehmann helped cut the ribbon and celebrated the opening of the library’s expansion into outdoor patron space.

In June, the library hosted a trip to the New York Botanical Gardens for the Chihuly glass sculpture exhibit. Seats on the bus sold out immediately. The library once again participated in the New City Street Fair in June.

This year’s One Town, One Book program featured the fiction title, *The Namesake*, by Jhumpa Lahiri. Discussions, films, and lectures about the Indian immigrant experience in America enriched the patron experience of those reading the book.

Adult Summer Reading was offered for the first time. Dozens of grownups enjoyed the reading-for-prizes concept so much that we are offering a winter version.

As circulation of physical materials continues to sag, the library increased its offerings of digital downloadables and streaming content. The Overdrive collection was expanded significantly, and the multimedia collections Hoopla and Kanopy were added.

Some alterations were made to the physical space to enhance productivity, offer more public meeting space, and provide safety measures for outdoor events. Delivery of interlibrary loan materials was re-routed to the Technical Services entrance in the basement according to the original design of the building. Adult Services librarian offices were re-organized in order to create a small, two-person meeting space primarily given over to Literacy Solutions tutoring. Concrete, spherical bollards were installed along the front lawn to provide a barrier for the safety of patrons attending outdoor events so close to parking.

A Request for Proposals was issued to library architectural firms to solicit interest in creating a Master Plan for the facilities. Interviews of selected firms began in December, and it is anticipated that there could be a completed plan by late spring 2018.

The library received several generous donations during the year. Family and friends of a beloved patron donated a teak bench with a plaque inscription; it was placed beneath the

flagpole and gets much use as a sunny spot to sit or a comfortable place to wait for a ride. An anonymous donation of \$2,000 was received. Another patron donated \$600 to buy the portico benches and affix memorial plaques to them.

The patio paver fundraiser hit a milestone of 50 pavers sold. Over \$10,000 in gross revenue has been received. The Clarkstown Gardening Club, which volunteers every year with our Garden Rockers Club in the children’s section, also donated their time to us in the form of design of our patio planters.

Library staff migrated to the Google Suite of productivity apps for nonprofit organizations. Shared calendars, an improved email experience, and the capacity to work collaboratively online are just a few of the benefits of taking advantage of this free product.

Highlighting our transition from temple of knowledge to lively hub of human connectivity was a front-page article in the Journal News on how today’s library is evolving to serve new community needs. The New City Library was featured and rightly so. New concepts such as outdoor patron space, coding workshops, and 3D printing are ones that we embrace fully as we continually work towards satisfying the needs and interests of today’s library user. We look forward to providing these and more innovative services to our community in 2018.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Silver, Director
NEW CITY LIBRARY
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