

Last year's annual report ended on the hopeful note that 2021 would provide a return to normalcy following the COVID-19 pandemic. While that was not how things turned out, the New City Library board and staff persevered through to find a way to continue to provide superior service to the community.

At the all-staff quarterly meeting in January, as is custom, staff achieving milestones of service were awarded with pins and honored with a PowerPoint tribute. The following staffers were recognized:

- Administrative Assistant Kelly Corrado (5 years of service)
- Custodian Travis Seward (5 years of service)
- Library Assistant II Susan Telesca (20 years of service)
- P/T Librarian I Laurie Gessner (30 years of service)

On another, happy, staff-related note: four of our employees welcomed bouncing baby boys in 2021. (Sociologists are dubbing this new generation "the quarantennials.")

Building occupancy was limited at the beginning of the year in order to comply with state and local health mandates. Entrance was only permitted to pick up holds, browse the stacks, and use the computer for short periods of time. Only in June was the Library able to allow patrons to take a seat and study, work, and read in all areas of the Library. As long as weather permitted, patrons continued to use the outdoor patio with its ample wi-fi and electric access.

Programs continued online for almost the first half of the year, and when the more agreeable weather arrived, outdoors. Selected indoor programming where attendance could be controlled to allow social distancing resumed in September.

Popular remote programs for children included Among Us (an online survivor game), Take and Make (prepackaged craft supplies to complete at home) and Imagination Station. Beginning in May, children's programs could be conducted outdoors: Tween Crafts in the Children's Garden, Romper room on the grassy areas next to the building, Sensory Storytime, and Storytime outdoors at the Congers Train. Mr. Kurt's always popular concerts returned in July and that brought some much-needed joy to young families. Summer Reading participation went back up to 264 (35 last year), but this was still considerably lower than years past.

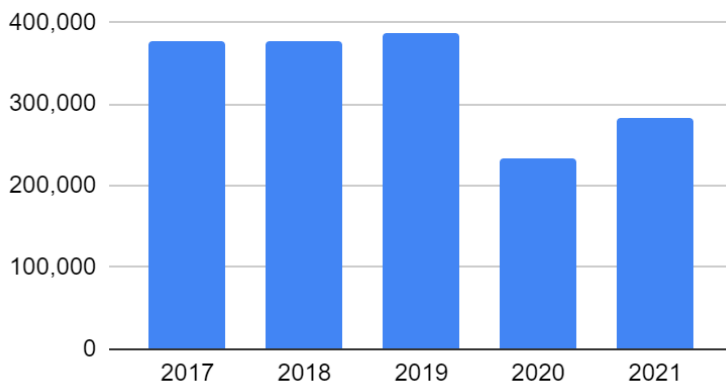
For the teens, online painting and embroidery classes were enjoyed by those adolescents and their families. For the adults, online art history and music lectures, genealogy talks and workshops, and generally nostalgic topics proved extremely popular, drawing more attendance than in-person events due to participants outside of our service area. Tai Chi on the lawn returned in the nicer weather, along with outdoor craft activities.

On June 25, the Library celebrated the 50th anniversary of its charter by distributing small gift bags to the first 50 patrons.

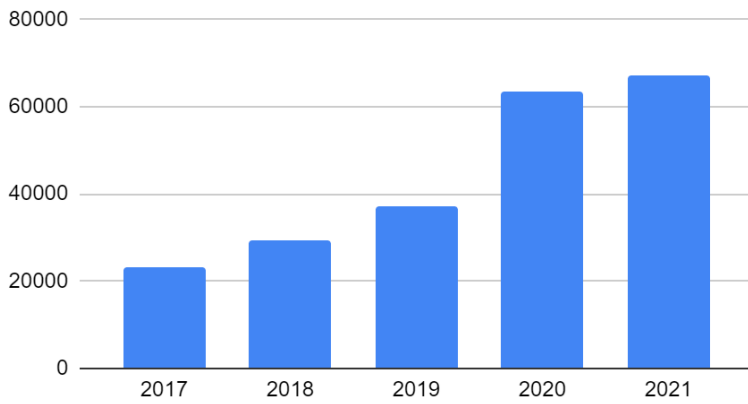
The Library renovation and addition became real as the contracts for the architects VMDO and construction management firm Consigli were signed at the beginning of the year. Design Development took approximately six months to complete, and the construction documents were completed at the very end of the year. During this time, the Library administration and staff found a temporary location on Main Street to work from during construction. Dubbed the New City Library Express, it will provide holds pickup, scaled-down browsing collections, internet, printing, and office space for staff. Programming will be conducted remotely at locations throughout town. Online programming will continue to be a permanent part of our program offerings.

Below is an overview of various activities over the past five years. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic caused shutdowns of most workplaces and public places beginning in March 2020, and that is reflected in the charts.

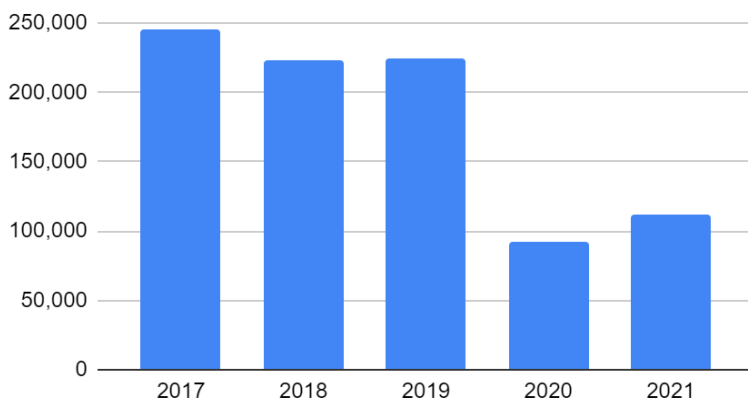
Physical checkouts



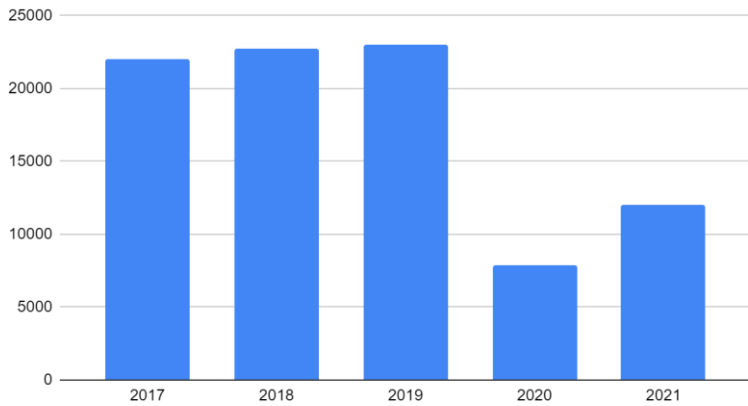
Digital checkouts



Door count



Program attendance



Statistics for 2021 may reflect even greater changes as the Library operates out of its considerably smaller quarters. Expect those numbers to rebound once we move back into our beautiful new space in mid-2023!

This report ends in gratitude to the best Library staff in Rockland County, who went above and beyond to provide exceptional service during testing times to a community that truly appreciated the effort. Genuine thanks go to the Library Board who did all that they could to ensure that the Library staff and facilities were supported and sustained throughout this long year. Many compliments were received throughout the year in which patrons expressed their thanks to us for providing a respite during a second year of challenging circumstances.

May the renovation gods smile upon us in 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Gallagher, Director
NEW CITY LIBRARY
January 20, 2022

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