

## **Inlet Public Library Annual Meeting**

### **Summary of 2024**

The Town of Inlet Public Library strives to be a vital asset to the Inlet community. Our vision is to be a people-driven viable source of books, information, technology and community, addressing the needs of our year-round population, seasonal residents, visitors and tourists. We provide literacy opportunities to both children and adults through various programs, events and opportunities.

During the past year (November 2023 – October 2024) the library provided the following services:

- Patron visits increased to 7,692
- Materials checked out (books, movies on DVD and Blue Ray, books on CD) increased to 4,891
- Use of library computers (179). Although many visitors use private laptops, having access to public computers remains a vital service
- Use of our 24-hour wi-fi (3,172) both in the library and in the courtyard
- Electronic Books and Audio Books access increased significantly to 1,020
- Faxing and photocopy services
- Notary services
- Access to the used book room, where used books, movies and puzzles are available on a free-will donation basis
- Discount passes for the Adirondack Experience and the Wild Center

The library is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10-2 and Saturday from 10-12. From July through September the library is open Monday through Friday from 10-3 and Saturday from 10-1. Patrons and visitors appreciate the library being open with access not only to books and materials but also access to computers, wi-fi, faxing, photocopying and Notary services. The courtyard is used regularly to access both the 24-hour wi-fi and charging station as well as being a pleasant place to read and relax.

The library is staffed by Library Director Joanne Kelly and three Library Assistants, Debbie Haynes, Sue Huber, and Holly Koeppe who share the summer hours and fill in when Joanne is absent. As Holly took a leave of absence this summer, Heidi Cahill joined the team of Assistants. In addition to the staff, several volunteers provide vital assistance throughout the year. These volunteers include Barbara Thibado, Friend of the Library, who decorates the windows and interior with seasonal displays, and Sarah Kukko who organized and led the Storytime for Children program. Additional volunteer service was provided by Noah Foster and Melissa Quinn. We are fortunate to live in a community where so many people are ready to give of their time.

With a good knowledge of what patrons like and need, the Library Director works diligently to obtain materials which will be utilized. In addition to a high demand for best-seller books and books on CD, the demand for movies on DVD and Blue Ray remains high as some year-round

patrons as well as many seasonal patrons and visitors do not have access to network television programs. Good use is made of the Southern Adirondack Library System's (SALS's) interlibrary system. In the past year we borrowed 442 materials, but what is more noteworthy is that we loaned 1,839 materials to member libraries. The used book room remains popular and is open any time the library is open. Used books, movies, and puzzles are available on a free-will donation basis.

A major event for our community during 2024 was the solar eclipse on April 8. With Inlet located in the path of totality, the community prepared for an influx of visitors to the area. The library was prepared with eclipse activities and books for children, commemorative stickers, the ever-popular rubber ducks sporting sunglasses and homemade eclipse cookies. Over 120 people visited the library during the event.

With a focus on children's literacy, the library hosted or participated in several events and initiatives through the year. In addition to the activities offered during the solar eclipse in April, the library hosted kite decorating for the annual Frozen Fire & Lights event in February, participated in a "read-in" at Moose River Farms in July where story-reading was accompanied by the farm animals, and hosted an author presentation and visiting owl on Adirondack Kids Day in October. Storytime for Children was held over the summer months, which featured a book reading and accompanying activity, and was well attended with an average of 8 children participating each week. The "find the duck" program continues to be very popular. Once the duck, hidden somewhere in the library is found, the child can choose a miniature rubber duck to take home. Expanding on the program and working with the assistance of the technology staff at SALS, ducks are now labeled with a QR code that allows children to link to the library's website and mark the location of their duck on an interactive map. Throughout the last months, children have been coloring wooden craft sticks which will be glued into a "quilt" wall hanging. Participation in the summer reading program was down this year, with only 17 children participating. Those that did participate were awarded with prizes, supplied by local businesses, for reaching their reading goal. An effort will be made next year to more widely advertise the program to increase participation.

Adult literacy is promoted through the library's monthly Inlet Library Book Club, with a membership of 29 members, and an average of 10 attending the monthly discussion group. Many members are seasonal or do not wish to join the discussion group but still want to read the books. Over the past year the Book Club conducted a campaign to explore various, and sometimes lesser-known genres of literature, selecting a new genre each month. Books in the genres of biography/autobiography, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, and non-fiction were selected, challenging members to read books in genres they might not have normally selected.

In keeping with our goal of being a vital part of the Inlet community, and to increase awareness of library services, the library participates in community events and partners with various community organizations. Over the past year, the library was open during Christmas on Main Street in November, Frozen Fire and Lights in February, Arts in the Park in July and the Fall Festival in September. During these annual events, the used book room was a draw, and the resulting donations contributed to the library's fund-raising activities. We maintain a working relationship with the Inlet Area Business Association (IABA) and the Inlet Area Community Task

Force (IACTF). These partnerships keep us informed of what the organizations offer to the community and allow us to demonstrate how library services can be utilized by them. In addition, this year the library hosted a Memorial Day event by the American Legion Leonard-Micks-Roberts Post #1402. In August, the library hosted the community at our annual Ice Cream Social, where 95 ice cream sundaes were made and enjoyed.

Funding for the library comes from a variety of sources. Government sources of funds include the Town of Inlet, the Inlet Common School, SALS (library state aid) and Hamilton County. Most of the library funding comes from individual donations, memorial donations, library fund-raising activities, donations generated through the used book room, family trust funds, charitable trust funds, local Association funds, the donation jars, fees for faxing and printing services, and rent generated through use of the upstairs office. During the past year the library received a grant through the Adirondack Foundation Generous Acts Grant program, which allowed for the purchase of three laptop computers. Also, this year the library partnered with the Community Foundation and benefited from the Foundation's Mohawk Valley Gives Day in September. The library anticipates expanding its participation in Community Foundation fund-raising events in the coming year.

Projects completed over the past year included installation of an electronics cabinet to safely store the wi-fi, computer and networking equipment. This project cleaned up an unsightly corner of the library and was a long-awaited and welcome improvement. Another project was an update of the library's website, ensuring that the site is up to date with all information, meeting minutes and policies included. Both the library's website and Facebook page are important sources of information and are viewed by many. For the coming year, the library anticipates a costly project in the replacement of the two large front windows.

Library Trustees participated in organized trainings through webinars, and again met the requirements for annual approved training. Training topics included Duties & Responsibilities of Library Trustees, Effective Library Board Meetings and Sexual Harassment Prevention Training. In addition to Sexual Harassment Prevention Training, the Library Director attended a workshop on book repair and an Excel class to better track the types of materials the library purchases.

Efforts to ban books, especially in schools and libraries, are occurring in unprecedented numbers across the country. Believing that reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms, the library was proud to become a partner of Unite Against Book Bans, a national American Library Association initiative to empower readers everywhere to stand together in the fight against censorship.

Inlet is a small, rural community with a diverse population. The year-round population of around 300 expands to triple that number in the summer with seasonal residents and visitors. The library strives to meet the diverse needs of these populations. Whether people come to the library to take advantage of the many services offered, or to find a comfortable place to relax, read or socialize, the library and staff are ready to meet their needs. In addition to the staff and volunteers noted above, the library is fortunate to have a supportive and committed Board of Trustees. The Trustees include Ellie Andrews, Sue Beck, Jean Bird, Jennifer Blakeman, Katie Chambers, Reggie Chambers, Kim Egenhofer, Rebecca Hasemeier, Mary Jane Lasher, JoAnn

Meneilly and Jeanne Wilson. In addition to providing guidance and governance over library activities, these Trustees provide innumerable hours of volunteer support. The library family consisting of the Library Director, Library Assistants, Trustees and volunteers are all committed to providing the best library services to our community. We could not provide these services successfully without the help and support of SALS and most particularly its technology staff. In addition, we are grateful for the support that the Town officials and staff so generously give to the library. And, as always, we are most grateful to our patrons, for without them the library would not exist.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Egenhofer, President, Library Board of Trustees

Jeanne Wilson, Vice-President, Library Board of Trustees