

2022

Annual Report



**Prepared by
Hsihsi Chung
Library Director**

2022 was a year of rebounding, recovery, and rewards for the Metuchen Public Library following the 2-year Covid pandemic.

I am incredibly grateful for and proud of the library staff, who worked hard together to provide exceptional library programs, services, and resources to the community throughout the pandemic.

Over 124,766 items were checked out, downloaded, streamed, and borrowed in 2022, a 34.26% increase, with over 71,800 people visiting the Library post-pandemic. The number of young adult checkouts increased to a new high at 9,647 items, a 64% increase from 5,872 items in 2021! The library offered more than 650 in-person, virtual, and hybrid programs and meeting spaces, with over 9,600 people of all ages attending. We were very grateful for the generous funding support from the Friends of Metuchen Library, in addition to the library budget from municipal funding of \$910,465.62.

The Metuchen Public Library acted as a cultural, civic, educational, recreational, and lifelong learning institute, a welcoming and comfortable space for the community, and a source of collaborative library-community partnerships. The library team re-engaged with the community through innovative programs for all ages in addition to our physical and digital resources and services. The library came back strong and pivoted to stay vibrant and vital to the community.

In response to the post-pandemic situation, the Library transitioned from curbside service and limited operating hours to full service for 62 hours a week, including 3,184 annual public service hours, to better serve the community. Mask-wearing became optional in March, and we were delighted to see many old friends and new users visiting the library.

Patrons borrowed, streamed, and downloaded over 24,000 pieces of digital content including ebooks, audiobooks, digital magazines, online newspapers, movies, music, and television shows. We also added LinkedIn Learning and Mango Language, and widely promoted Kanopy as another new streaming video platform available only to Metuchen cardholders, in addition to Overdrive/Libby and Hoopla.

Throughout the year, the library brought back popular programs, both in-person and virtual, and continued to offer them in hybrid as needed. There were 249 children's programs, over 600 Take and Make crafts, 64 young adult programs, and over 330 adult and community programs and activities. These included 8 author talks, 34 movie showings, and 4 major concerts, along with many more activities for the community.

The Library had several regular programs that had high attendance demands, and we were pleased to offer two sessions to meet the needs and interests of the community. The Library offered Zoom with a Meeting Owl device for hosting hybrid programs and meetings to great effect. The Spanish Book Club and Metuchen Book Discussion Club were happy to transition from virtual to hybrid. New programs, including Bouncing Babies, Story Walk, Metuchen Writers Club, Chess Club, Board Game Night, Mahjong classes, Open Plays, and more have been welcome additions to our calendar.

The Library was awarded a Communication Access Service Grant of \$15,000 from the Middlesex County Office of Aging and Disabled Services. Through this grant, we were able to install induction hearing loops and portable hearing loop kits to serve people who are hard of hearing or wear hearing aids. In addition,

a video relay service kiosk was also made available through FCC funding to better serve the deaf community.

In December 2021, the Library received a \$5,000 donation in memory of Martin Spritzer, a former Borough Attorney, to strengthen the collection on anti-racism and provide programs to raise awareness. Additionally, the Library received a generous donation from a deceased library supporter, Lorraine Bachman, as well as several private donations and memorial funds to enhance library programs, collections, and services.

Although the Library's 2021 application of renovation and space re-design proposal was not selected under the New Jersey Construction Bond Act and was only placed on the 3rd Substitute List, the Library continued to address critical issues with the Borough and looked for other capital improvement funding opportunities to improve the condition of the Library building and grounds. In 2022, the Department of Public Works replaced several old sinks with newer and modern-looking vanities, upgraded the faucets and toilets, repaired the crumbling walls and ceilings in the lower level, and completed other building and grounds-related repairs and maintenance. We were also pleased to have the ventilation and temperature control units upgraded through funding from the Borough.

The Library experienced some personnel turnover but continued to work towards building a strong and healthy team to provide the highest level of library services to our diverse community. The team is comprised of 5 full-time employees and 13 part-time employees. We are ready to embrace challenges and increase community outreach and partnerships.

The Library would like to express our gratitude and sincere appreciation to departed library board trustees, Linda Koskoski, Liz Waldron, Kellie Davideit, and Carol Gaffney (who left in Jan. 2023) for their dedicated contributions and services. We are especially indebted to Linda and Liz who served on the board for more than 10 years and have been instrumental in improving and advocating for the Metuchen Library! We wish them all the best and hope they will continue supporting the library!

Overall, 2022 was an exciting and productive year. The library is grateful for the support of the Board of Trustees, staff, private donors, the Friends of Metuchen Library, our many library partners and supporters, as well as the Mayor and Council!

In 2023, the library will continue to make a positive difference in the community. We look forward to continuing to develop, engage, and connect through innovative and inclusive library programs and services, with a focus on our mission and vision and an emphasis on equity, diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom. Values that are vital to ensuring a vibrant community!

Hsihsi Chung

Library Director

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Operating Revenue

Funding Sources	Amount	%
*Borough (1/3 Mil)	\$910,485.62	94.38%
State Aid (2022)	\$7,749.00	0.8%
Friends (2020-2022)	\$20,802.38	2.16%
**Donations	\$10,675.00	1.11%
Grants	\$15,000.00	1.55%
Total Revenue	\$964,712.00	100%

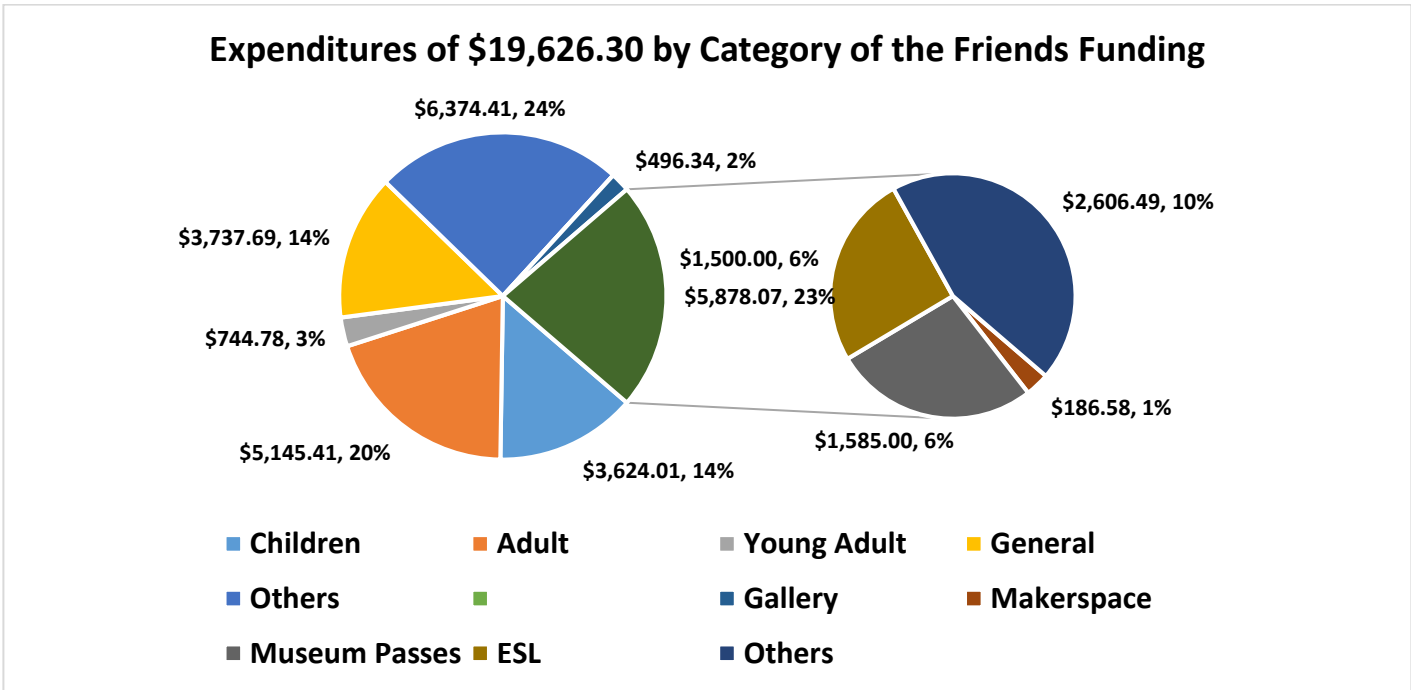
*An additional \$29,185.13 of Library's LMXAC annual membership cost expended by Borough through the Shared Service Agreement.

**Two private donations of \$5,000 each from Martin Spritzer Fund to bring awareness and build collection on anti-racism and equality, as well as Lorraine Bachman who was a long-time library supporter.

Operational Expenditures

Category	Amount	%
Personnel	\$484,253.48	51.3%
Offsets & Benefits	\$240,320.92	25.5%
Library Operations	\$172,776.61	18.3%
Other funding for Operations	\$46,382.66	4.9%
Total Expenditures	\$943,733.47	100%

Expenditures of the Friends Annual Gift:



Over 3 Million Dollars' worth of value by selected services and usages in 2022

Library Materials & Services	Value of Service *	Number of Uses	Total Value of Usage
Adult/YA Books Borrowed	\$17.00	45,831	\$779,127.00
Children's Books Borrowed	\$17.00	54,533	\$927,061.00
Audiobooks/Movies/CD Borrowed	\$9.50	9,018	\$85,671.00
Digital Resources Downloaded *Ebooks/audiobooks/movies/others	\$15.00	24,402	\$366,030.00
Interlibrary Loan Requests	\$25.00	26,169	\$654,225.00
Magazines/Newspapers Borrowed and Read	\$5.00	7099	\$51,245.00
Meeting Room Use (per hour)	\$25.00	473	\$11,825.00
Adult Program Attended	\$15.00	5,263	\$78,945.00
Young Adult Program Attended	\$12.00	476	\$5,712.00
Children's Program Attended	\$7.00	3,977	\$27,839.00
Museum Passes Borrowed	\$20.00	127	\$2,540.00
Computer Use (per hour)	\$12.00	5,633	\$67,596.00
Reference Assistance	\$7.00	5,109	\$35,763.00
Database Searches	\$19.95	10,149	\$202,472.55
Wireless Access	\$4.50	11,126	\$50,067.00
Total Value of Your Library Use in Return on Investment (ROI)			\$3,346,118.55

*The cost figures for library services were derived by the [Massachusetts Library Association](#), based on average prices from companies providing similar services including Amazon, Barnes & Noble

Library Value of Return on Investment to the Community

Library Return on Investment (ROI)

Economic Value of Library Services

ROI= _____

Library Budget

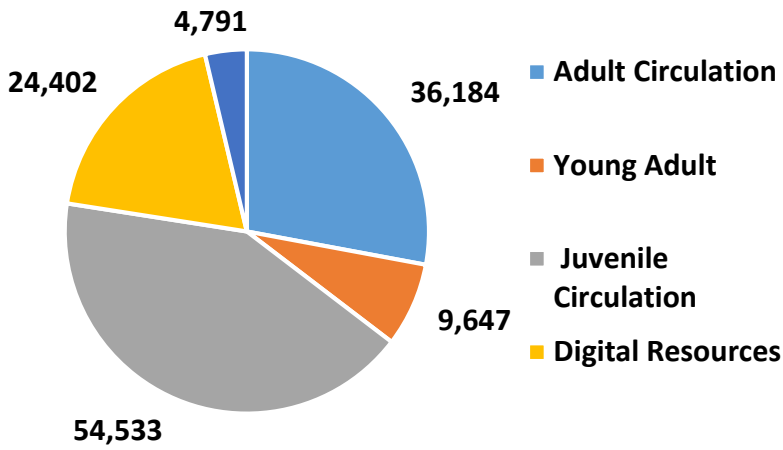


- ❖ 2022 Appropriation Cost Per Capita: \$60.50
- ❖ 2022 Library Cost per Resident per Day: \$0.16
- ❖ Estimated Yearly Economic Value of Library Services = \$3,346,118.55
- ❖ 2022 Library Municipal Budget = \$910,485.62
- ❖ Return on Investment (ROI) = \$3.68
- ❖ For every \$1.00 invested in Metuchen Public Library, \$3.68 of value is returned to the community



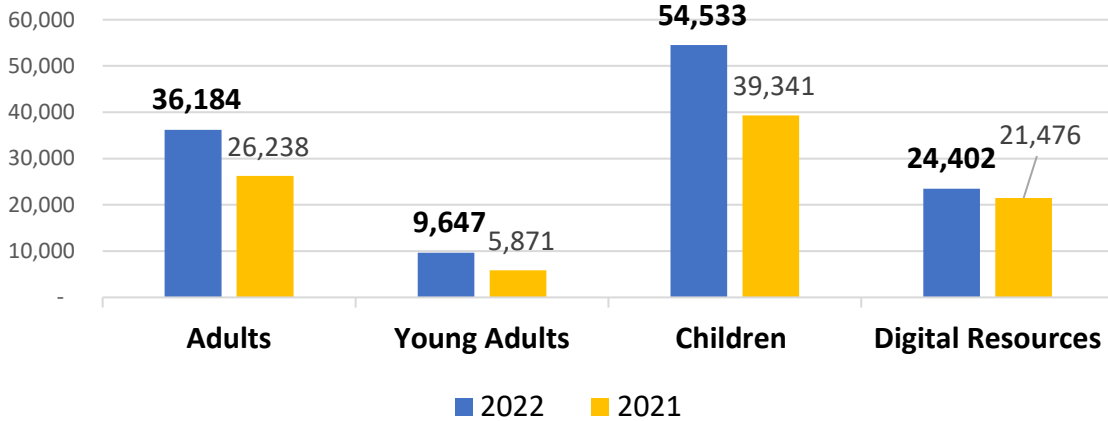
LIBRARY STATISTICS

2022 Annual Circulation, 124,766

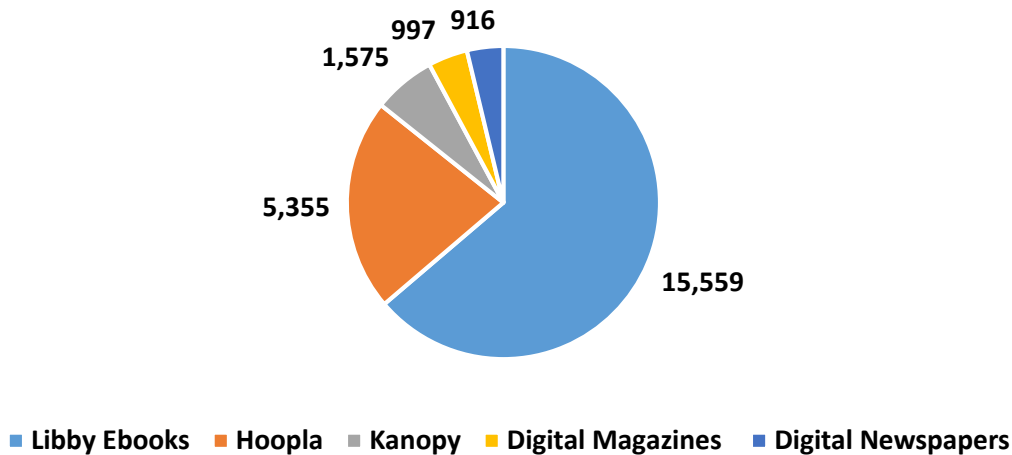


*excluding the in-house circulation

Circulation by Category

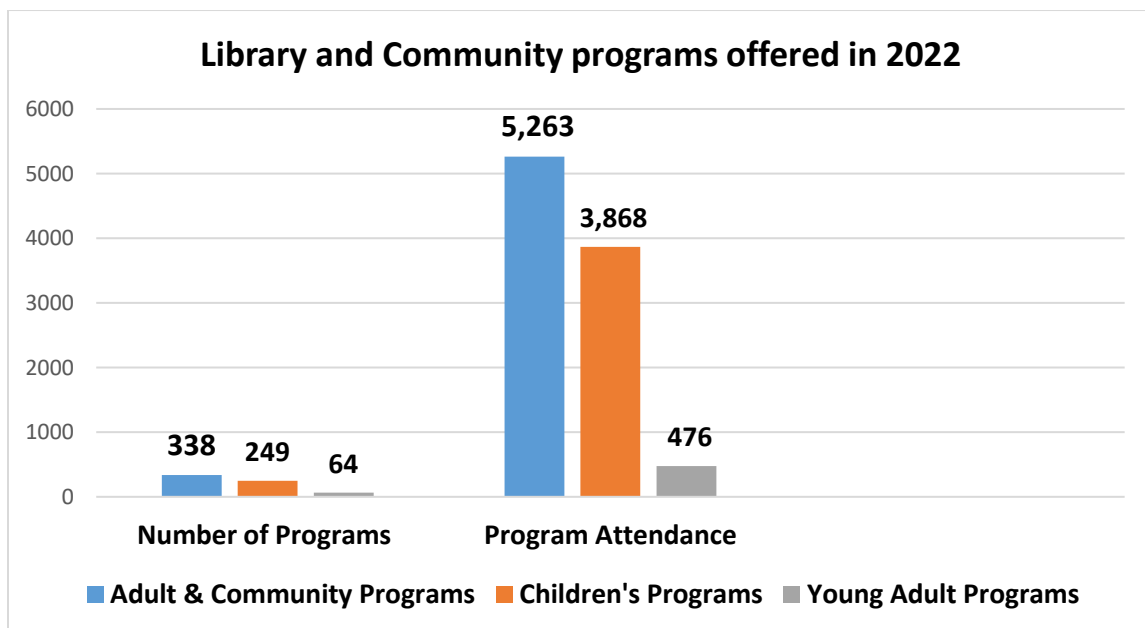
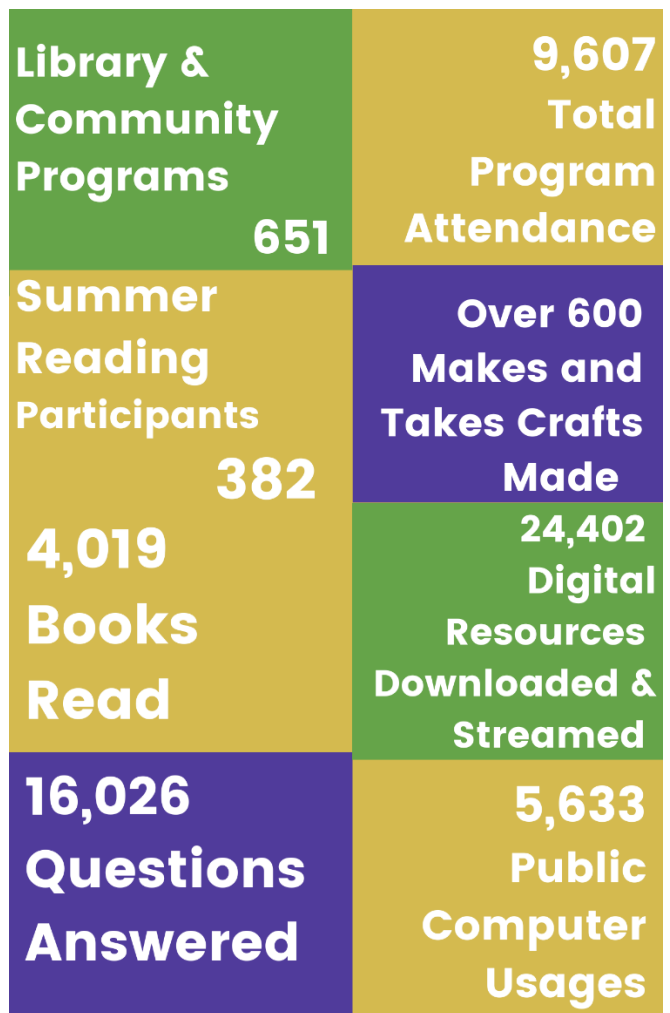
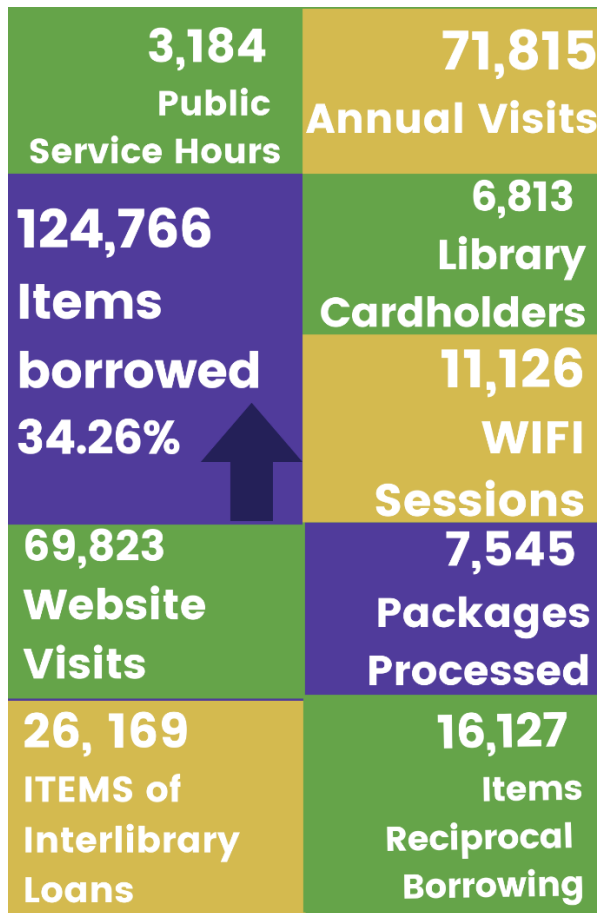


Major Digital Resources of 24,402 Borrowed in 2022



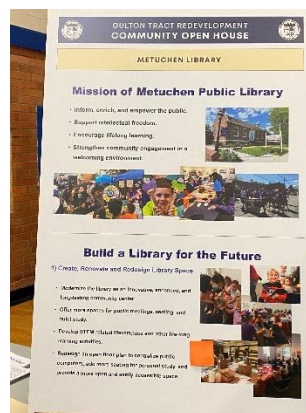
Major Highlights

In a Glance



Highlights in January, February, & March

- Library's limited services due to the pandemic in January and February were expanded to full services and mask-wearing optional in March
- The Library began in-person, virtual and hybrid programs and provided library space for small group meetings and seating, resumed popular library programs and offered notary public, curbside and homebound delivery services
- A Borough Resolution approved the cost of \$42,678.90 to replace and upgrade temperature and air handler controllers
- Participated in Borough Community Open House on Gulton Tract Redevelopment Plan and presented the library renovation and improvement plan
- The Department of Public Works did the building maintenance including the Gallery wall repainted, public and employee restrooms faucets, sink and toilets fixtures upgraded, and repaired the crumbling walls and ceilings in the lower level
- Installed Smart Money Manager (SMM) system to manage daily financial transactions and SAM for public computers and print management at the main service desk
- Makers Day had over 100 participants in various library maker events
- The library offered new programs and clubs including three author talks, pajama storytime, Metuchen Writers Club, Smarty Pants Book Club, and celebrated the NJ Snapshot Month in February of "I love my library because..."






Highlights in April, May, & June

- Celebrated National Library Week from April 3 through 9th, offered Fines and Fees Forgiveness in April and attracted over 379 people participated in 5 basket raffle drawings
- Library was awarded a \$15,000 Communication Access Service Grant from the Middlesex County Office of Aging and Disabled Services to expand library services to people who are deaf and hard of hearing
- Three author talks and two jazz concerts were offered this quarter with over 150 library programs
- Library board members, volunteers and library staff participated in the Memorial Day Parade
- The Summer Reading Program “Ocean of Possibilities” kicked off on June 15. A wide range of programs, crafts, activities, and concerts was offered
- Online Reservations for Museum Passes became available to Metuchen Library cardholders and Friends members
- Board Game Night, Chess Club, Library Lab, and Mahjong Classes were created and offered
- Spanish Book Club celebrated its 7th anniversary



2022 Summer Reading - Oceans of Possibilities
June 15 through August 19

metuchenpubliclibrary.beanstack.org

Highlights in July, August, & September

- Summer Reading Programs “Ocean of Possibilities” - fully funded by the Friends of Metuchen Library - had over 382 people signed up, 121 peer reviews were shared, over 4,100 books read, equivalent to more than 246,000 minutes read, and major grand prizes were provided to the lucky winners
- Celebrated September Library Card Signup Month with 18 businesses participating to offer discounts and incentives to Metuchen Library cardholders when purchases were made at those businesses and services
- The “Remembering Martin Spritzer” event presented 12 panels of his works and contributions to the community, a special collection had been built from his memorial donation, with over 50 people including our State Senator, Commissioners, Councilman, and many local leaders attending
- A Library Story Walk was installed on the outdoor grounds. The first book was “Hike” by Allison Farrell
- Two 6’ Madison/cedar benches in memory of two long-time Friends volunteers, Louie Kuhn, and Dominic Walker were funded by the Friends



Highlights in October, November, & December

- Friends of the Metuchen Library generously approved the highest amount ever of a \$20,000 annual gift to the Library through the year-round fundraising effort and membership drive to support library programming and other operation needs in 2023
- Friends of the Metuchen Library had a successful annual book sale held inside for the first time
- A looping system was installed in the meeting room upstairs through the Communication Access Grant to expand services and program opportunities to people who are hard of hearing
- A Purple Communication Videophone kiosk installed by ZVRS through the FCC funding support to provide the video replay service (VRS) enables DEAF to communicate with an on-screen interpreter option through this device.
- The gallery hosted a gala reception 10x10x100 fundraising event with over 100 people in attendance
- The Garden Club of Metuchen decorated the library with beautiful flower pots during the holiday season
- A Resolution from the Borough approved \$308,600.00 to repair and upgrade the library elevator in 2023



Highlights of Major Partnerships

Friends of the Metuchen Library



The Friends of the Metuchen Library generously gave their annual gift of \$10,000 in 2021 and \$20,000 in 2022 to support the library programming and other library services and resources. The Friends volunteers engaged in year-round hard work to fundraise and support the Metuchen Public Library. The efforts included successful indoor book sales, membership drives, and many fundraising events. We were so grateful and excited! We hope to have more library supporters join the Friends and show support for the Library and the community!



Library Gallery

The Library Gallery volunteers led by Margaret Cohen as the Gallery Coordinator held six major art exhibitions and receptions and also coordinated with the Metuchen Senior Center to display their art in the Library. Margaret organized a successful fundraising gala for a 10x10x100 art exhibit in December 2022, which attracted many great artists and gallery supporters!



Garden Club of Metuchen



The Garden Club of Metuchen and its dedicated volunteers continued to maintain and provide beautiful library gardens throughout the year. The **Library Seed Program** was contributed by the volunteers of the Garden Club. A dedicated Friends volunteer generously brought fresh flowers regularly to brighten up the library space.



Metuchen Arts Council and the Friends of Metuchen Arts

We collaborated with the Metuchen Arts Council (MAC) and the Friends of Metuchen Arts (FOMA) to schedule arts and musical events throughout the year including four major concert series including the Mike Lee Quartet live Jazz concert to celebrate the International Jazz Festival, a community chamber music concert in



July, the Alejandro Ataucusi & Forbidden Tropics, Afro-Peruvian Jazz Band in October, and Scott Robinson Quartet in November. The Library also partnered with MAC, and FOMA to apply for an art grant from the Arts Institute of Middlesex County and was awarded \$4,000 for music-related programs and performances in 2023.

Literacy

Literacy classes came back in September 2022 every Saturday morning led by literacy volunteer, Perla Van Charma! This program was partnered with Literacy New Jersey and was funded through the Friends of Metuchen Library!



2023 LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Samina Ali, President

Brian Hajjar, Vice President

Caitlin Mollison, Treasurer

Karen Chaplin, Secretary

Spencer Dreher, Trustee

Karen Alexander, Trustee

Charmane Motgmonery, Superintendent's Representative

Daniel Hirsch, Mayor's Representative

Metuchen Public Library

480 Middlesex Ave.

Metuchen, NJ 08840

P: 732-632-8526

www.metuchenlibrary.org

Hours of Services:

Monday-Thursday 10-9 PM

Friday-Saturday 10-5 PM

Sunday (Sept.-Mid-June) 1-5 PM

Follow us 😊



LIBRARY STAFF

Hsihsi Chung, Library Director

Justine Johnson, Senior Librarian for User Services

Glynis Brookens, Senior Librarian for Youth Services

Eunkyoung Ju, Adult Service Librarian

Jules Richards, Young Adult Librarian

Stella Carr, Principal Library Assistant

Gretta Boardley, Library Assistant

Zach Brackett, Library Assistant

Nicole Chinchar, Library Assistant

Lorraine Doyle, Library Assistant

Connie Feng, Library Assistant

Christine Gonzalve, Library Assistant

Joanne Jacobson, Children's Service Specialist

Roxane Pantoja, Library Assistant

Rohan Pundlik, Library Technology Assistant

Raymond Shirley, Library Assistant

Snehalbalen Vidyarthi, Bookkeeper

Jeffrey Chiang, Library Page

Retired staff:

Vivian Lanciotti, Library Assistant