

Metuchen Public Library

2016 Annual Report



2016 Key Library Statistics

Visits to the library: 135,966

Items checked out: 107,315

Number of library cardholders: 6,893

Library program attendance: 9,031

Number of library programs: 545

Community programs and meetings: 167

Attendance at community programs and meetings: 3,353

Summary

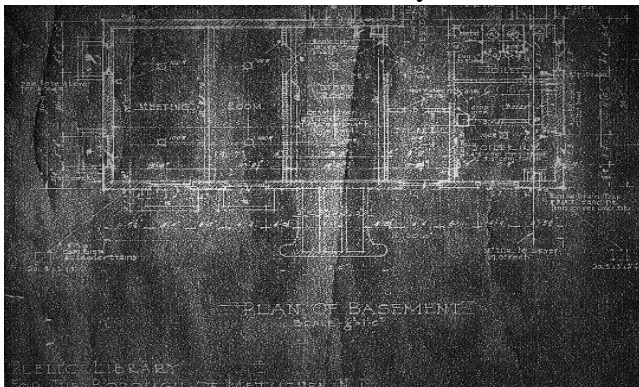
The Metuchen Public Library had many changes in 2016, the biggest being the retirement of director Susanna Chan. Susanna should be proud of her legacy—especially the marked increases in the number of community and library sponsored programs held, and in the number of people who attended those programs. These increases could be seen at all levels, from events for children to programs and meetings for adults and teens. The library welcomed the new director, John Arthur, in December of 2016. He plans to build on Susanna’s achievements.



John Arthur, Susanna Chan with Metuchen resident, former Governor Florio

Buildings & Grounds

The Board of Trustees and the director met with architects to discuss renovating the library’s basement. The architects provided quotes for conducting studies of options for this space—the goal being multi-faceted, with emphases on better community meeting space, better ease of use for both the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society and the Friends of the Library, and more functional work areas for library staff.



Original basement plans for Metuchen Public Library

Finance

The library’s “one-third mill” funding (the legal minimum) has continued to increase since 2014, reaching \$748,641 this past year. Although this trend is positive, the level of funding remains below levels in 2009 (\$792,618), though it is still significantly higher than the recent low point of \$698,943 in 2014.

As budget levels have improved, the amount of materials, eBooks, and other resources available to the public has increased after taking heavy cuts for a few years.

Library Board of Trustees



Linda Koskoski holding her Trustee of the Year award.

Outgoing Board President Linda Koskoski left the Board of Trustees at the end of 2016. Linda was given the 2016 Trustee of the Year Award from LMxAC (Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium). In 2017, she began serving on the Metuchen Borough Council.

School representative Patricia Glave also left the board at the end of 2016. Board Vice-President Ellen Greenberg left the board as of July 1, 2016, and was replaced by Shannon Wagner, who attended his first board meeting in September 2016.

Personnel

Teen Librarian Kathy Liss retired at the end of 2016. Kathy started working for the library in 1992. She built the teen program, with a robust Teen Advisory Board, author visits, and other notable programs.



Members of the Teen Advisory Board with Kathy Liss

Collection Development

Three new collections were launched in 2016: the Friends of the Library provided funding to start an adult graphic novel section as well as a TV series collection. Marjorie Risk Memorial Funds were used to start a children's graphic novel section. These collections will continue to be built as funds become available.

Collaborations

Friends of the Metuchen Public Library

Every year, the Friends of the Metuchen Public Library raise funds through book sales, special events, and membership drives which support library events, classes, and collections. In 2016, the Friends provided approximately \$20,000 in additional funding which helped the library

offer award-winning cultural programming, language learning, new book and film collections, classes on a wide variety of topics for all ages, and much more. The Friends also beautify the library gardens and grounds, reaching out to the broader community for further assistance.

Members of the Friends also form the Art Gallery Committee, which has transformed the library's community room into an ever-changing flow of high-quality works from local and regional artists. Through their efforts, we have hosted art gallery openings and attracted hundreds of additional visitors to the library every year.



Garden Club of Metuchen

In collaboration with the Friends of the Metuchen Public Library, the gardens surrounding our library are also planted and cared for by the Garden Club of Metuchen (GCM). Every spring and fall, you can see GCM members in their green shirts sprucing up library garden beds and planters.

Makerspace Committee

The library's Makerspace provides programming based on robotics, 3D printing and design, coding, and numerous 21st century skills to the public, all culminating in an annual Maker's Day event that attracts hundreds of participants. The Makerspace is run by a team of dedicated volunteers—from Metuchen High School students to members of the community who work professionally in the tech industry.

Teen Advisory Board

Approximately 50 Metuchen middle-school and high-school aged students are members of the library's Teen Advisory Board. These dedicated volunteers help with many library events and classes, as well as work to keep the Young Adult section of the library up-to-date with book suggestions, and fun promotions to keep Metuchen teens reading throughout the year.

Programs



Dragon Dance as part of Lunar New Year Event

The biggest event of 2016 was Lunar New Year, attended by more than 400 people. This has been one of the biggest events every year since its launch in 2014. Maker Day was also a noteworthy event, as more than 200 people attended a variety of stations put together by library staff and volunteers. The Summer Reading Program also saw healthy increases, with 334 people signing up and 2,993 books read. In 2015, by contrast, 278 people signed up and read 1,729 books. In 2014, 263 signed up and read 1,979 books.

Challenges

The biggest challenges facing the library in 2016 were the replacement of library director Susanna Chan, as well as the retirement of Kathy Liss. Both Susanna and Kathy were highly-skilled librarians who created and strengthened programs, as can be seen in the sizable increase in program attendance, year over year.

Goals

The goals for 2017 and beyond are to continue the upward trend in program attendance and to introduce increasingly high-quality offerings that meet the needs of a wide variety of members of the community. Moreover, plans to renovate the library's basement will lead to a more functional library for both the public and for library staff.

Reopening the library on Sundays is also a goal. Historically, Sundays were one of the busiest days of the week at our library: these hours were eliminated due to budget cuts in 2014.

2016 Library Board of Trustees

Linda Koskoski, President
Ellen Greenberg, Vice President
Caitlin Mollison, Treasurer
Laura Stibich, Secretary
Kelly Jaques, Friends Liaison
Elizabeth Waldron
John Koskoski
Shannon Wagner
Patricia Glave, Superintendent's Representative
Reed Leibfried, Mayor's Representative

2016 Friends of the Library Board

Sondra Flite, President
Sharon Taylor, Vice President
Alisa Schleif, Treasurer
Marilyn Silver, Recording Secretary
Rosemarie Schwartzman, Correspond. Secretary
Lee Liss, Trustee
Dorothy Obropta, Trustee
Dominic Walker, Trustee

2016 Library Staff

Susanna Chan, Director
John Arthur, Director (December 2016)
Hsihsi Chung, Principal Librarian
John McBride, Senior Librarian
Glynis Brookens, Youth Services Librarian
Katherine Liss, Teen Librarian
Mary Beth Mulligan, Bookkeeper
Michael Cadena, Principal Library Assistant
Moira Whittington, Senior Library Assistant
Gretta Boardley, Library Assistant
Lorraine Doyle, Library Assistant
Kathy Gorman, Library Assistant
Vivian Lanciotti, Library Assistant
Ryan Miller, Library Assistant
Raymond Shirley, Library Assistant

Library Financial Statistics, 2012 - 2016

Years	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
One-Third Mill Funding	\$736,609	\$717,902	\$698,943	\$721,294	\$748,641
Per Capita State Aid	\$6,007	\$5,947	\$5,900	\$5,936	\$5,936
Fines & Fees Collected	\$14,408.27	\$13,398.15	\$9,367.67	\$9,206.95	\$9,083.99

Library Usage Statistics, 2012 - 2016

Years	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Material Circulation	135,353	122,548	109,202	114,934	107,315
Library Visitors	148,815	123,321	131,786	120,713	135,966
Public Computer Usage	7,518	6,924	12,426	19,577	20,587
Reference Questions	NA	NA	8076	7,814	8,051
No. of Community Programs & Meetings	113	110	179	185	167
Community Programs & Meetings Attendance	1,762	1,728	2,190	4,038	3,353
No. of Library Programs	367	336	292	335	545
Library Program Attendance	6,044	5,459	4,569	6,064	9,031
No. of Library Card Holders	6,474	7,081	7,297	6,960	6,893

Submitted by:

John Arthur

Director, Metuchen Public Library