Where Can I Get Reliable Information?

Library of The Chathams is a thriving, active center of our community that welcomes people of all ages and interests. More and more in today’s busy world, the library is a community destination – a place of exploration, activity and learning for everyone to enjoy.

Since its founding in 1924, the library has maintained a long-standing commitment to the community as a resource of reliable information as well as a gathering place for people to use and enjoy its facilities and collections. Last year the library continued to meet the current and future needs of the community by expanding opportunities for knowledge, information and personal interaction.

Please enjoy this report of the library’s accomplishments and high points of 2016.

Sincerely,

Karen Brodsky
Director, Library of The Chathams
ACHIEVEMENTS AND GROWTH

THE BUILDING

With the assistance of capital funding provided by Chatham Borough and Chatham Township, the library continues to maintain the building with an eye to safety, efficiency and adherence to regulations and codes.

Many long-standing needs, such as electric service updates, lighting upgrades, improved efficiency and more, will be addressed by the modernization plan (see below for details).

LIBRARY RMR PROJECT:
Fostering, learning, and building community in a safe, effective space.

A focus of the library Board of Trustees during 2016 was the continued development of the RMR Project, a plan to Renovate, Modernize and Reorganize the library’s existing space to meet the needs of a growing community. The plan aims to reshape six additions constructed over the last century into a more cohesive space.

Following are the main highlights of the plan, which will take place within the building’s existing footprint:

- Teen Center
- A new Children’s Activity Room
- Multi-Use STEM/Conference Room
- Three new quiet study rooms
- A modern, cataloged local history room
- Modern, efficient lighting
- Unobstructed walkways as well as other improvements enhancing patron safety
- Space for expanded programming

FUNDING GOALS AND PROGRESS TO DATE
Target: $4.5 million
Raised to date: $1.2 million

In November, 2016, the Board of Trustees presented the RMR Project to Chatham Township and Chatham Borough, along with a request for $3 million in funding from those municipalities. We are awaiting the results of that proposal and will update the community promptly.
LIBRARY USAGE IN 2016

With the RMR Project well underway, the library continued to serve its public without missing a step. We are pleased to report that as of last year, 80% of Chatham Borough and Chatham Township residents have a library card—and the usage statistics below bear out this finding.

- 238,527 Visits to library
- 227,352 Visits to library website (www.chathamlibrary.org)
- 227,147 Items checked out
- 34,510 Reference questions answered
- 454 adult programs = 4,964 adult participants
- 214 community group programs = 2,367 attendees
- All programs in total attracted 24,904 visitors!

The library is just as committed as ever to serving our younger patrons. Below is a breakdown of the attendance at events and programs geared toward library users age 18 and under:

- 552 youth programs = 16,684 visitors
- 77 teen events = 424 teen participants
- 602 children signed up for Summer Reading Club = they read 12,224 books!

COLLECTION ADDITIONS

The library’s permanent collection of traditional and non-traditional materials continued to grow. Last year we added 3,579 adult books, 1,045 audiovisual materials, 701 young adult items and 1,841 children’s books to our holdings. Generous gifts donated by members of the community underwrote 14% of the cost of these materials.

Also last year, in response to suggestions from the community, we established a Nontraditional Collection for circulation. Library cardholders can now check out items such as a telescope, virtual reality viewer, Fitbit device and power usage monitor.

We also expanded our selection of musical instruments, and we continue to loan out library-owned iPads and laptop computers. Our newest offering is a mobile wireless hotspot to use at home!
PROGRAMMING PROGRESS IN 2016

Our mission to serve applies to all members of the community—from infants to seniors, spanning booklovers to e-book downloaders to people who just enjoy coming to the library. We make use of both traditional materials and new technologies for organizing, informing, and engaging the community in activities they can enjoy on their own or with others.

3D puzzle assembled by a group of adults

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND MEETINGS

The library opens its doors to community organizations needing a convenient, safe and comfortable space where business can be attended to without interruption. The overall benefit to the community is immeasurable. As one example, in honor of National Women’s History Month, the library held the first annual Notable Women of New Jersey program with a record-breaking standing-room-only audience. Below is a list of community organizations that used the library’s facility during 2016.

- American Red Cross
- Chatham Antiques Club
- Chatham Boy Scouts
- Chatham Community Band
- Chatham Democrats
- Chatham Girl Scouts
- Chatham High School Key Club
- Chatham Historical Society
- Chatham Players
- Chatham Republicans
- Chatham United Soccer
- Garden State Quilters
- Kiwanis Club of Chatham/Madison
- League of Women Voters
- Morris County Embroiderers’ Guild
- New Jersey Blood Services
- PEO
- Relay for Life
- Sierra Club
- Woman’s Club of Chatham

Plus, a host of gatherings by knitting groups, garden clubs, writers’ groups as well as Spanish and Italian language conversation groups.
ADULT-FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

As a hub of community activity, the library is committed to providing a variety of sponsored programs to benefit the needs of the community in a convenient, familiar location. Below is a sampling of programs sponsored by the library in 2016:

Community Health
- Blood pressure screenings
- Yoga meditation and tai chi classes

Business and Career Support
- Notary service
- Income tax assistance
- Retirement and financial planning seminars
- Employment networking groups

Discussion Groups
- Book discussion groups
- Adult Summer Reading Club

The Arts
- Film showings
- Author talks
- Poetry readings
- Art shows
- Theatrical performances
- Music concerts

Workshops and Classes
The highly successful Chatham Adult Lifeworks Learning series (CALL) offered multi-week courses in art, music, history and current events. All courses were taught by subject specialists and local college faculty.

Other classes and workshops included:
- Photography, dance, and writing workshops
- Computer and reading device demonstrations
- Organizing workshops
- Home improvement workshops
- Travel lectures

MUSEUMS PARTNERSHIPS

The library expanded its Family Museum Passes program last year, thanks to funding from Friends of the Library. Passes available for loan now include:

- American Museum of Natural History
- Grounds for Sculpture
- Guggenheim Museum
- Frick Collection
- Imagine That!!!
- International Center of Photography
- Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum
- Montclair Art Museum
- Morris Museum
- Museum of the City of New York
CHILDREN AND YOUTH-FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

The library’s Youth Services Department continued to offer programs on many topics to expand our appeal to all ages—story time, music, art, chess and more. We served as a Young Readers’ Advisory, a resource to help find the next “perfect read” that would keep our younger patrons inspired. And we worked with teenagers to provide them with the materials and events that mean the most to them.

A team of hardworking and enthusiastic staff members provide enthralling and educational story times both for residents and local preschool children. They also decorate, develop craft projects, and carry out numerous educational efforts in coordination with school district personnel.

The Summer Reading Club has played a vital role in the lives of Chatham children for many years. Last year the Children’s Reading Program hosted 602 participants, who read a total of 12,224 books. We expended a major effort coordinating the 103 teens who volunteered 1,569 hours throughout the summer—but the results were clearly worth it. The Woman’s Club of Chatham sponsored both children’s and teen reading programs, offering prizes that included a much sought-after iPad 2 as the grand prize for teen readers.

Thursday is Library Day programming for preschoolers, sponsored by Friends of the Library, continued to be one of our highest attended programs. Each week the library provided music, dance, puppets and yoga classes for young children. These delightful events have become a highly anticipated part of our patrons’ weekly routines.

Our program of weekly chess clubs in the summer introduced the game to a new group of fans: the elementary school age group. Throughout 2016 the library offered weekly chess gatherings, which became so popular that our participants were disappointed when the sessions came to an end. In response to increased demand, we are adding another chess program in the spring.

For teens: We offered a six-week drawing class taught by a local artist. This class boasted perfect attendance—not one teen who signed up missed even a single class. Other outlets for teens’ creative expression and play included cupcake decorating classes and our weekly video game club. Finally, we developed a new music collection for teens consisting of trending artists not represented in the adult music collection. It has proven to be very popular not only with the intended audience but with other age groups as well.
COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

In 2016 we improved our campaign to promote our collections and services to the community through a wide variety of software, apps and social media services. These tools make it possible for us to continue offering easy, convenient access to the library and many of its resources.

Here are a few examples:

Through the library website and mobile app, users can accomplish tasks from a smartphone, tablet or desktop computer.

We introduced BookLetters, an online tool that recommends books based on criteria specified by the user, which enables us to promote our new books and collections on our website and via email, thus limiting our environmental impact.

The library’s active presence on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Meetup and Twitter, gave our community of users more choices in how they want to be communicated with. These social media tools are now accessible directly from the library’s website and mobile app, with no need to log in and out of multiple websites or platforms.

Last, but certainly not least, the library launched its enhanced newsletter. The project was made possible through the generosity, time, and talents of members of the Friends of the Library. This devoted group of individuals expanded distribution, enhanced the content and format and provided much of the funding for printing and mailing.
GIVING AND VOLUNTEERING
So much of what the library is able to accomplish depends on the generosity of its benefactors. Whether these supporters donated their time or their funds, we are grateful for their support of the library, its mission and its many constituents.

GENEROUS DONORS
We gratefully acknowledge generous support from our community, including special programming support from the following organizations and individuals:

- Ann L. Buesing Children’s Fund for Library of The Chathams of the Community Foundation of New Jersey
- Chatham Jaycees
- Friends of the Library
- Kiwanis Club of Madison and Chatham

A full listing of donors is available at https://chathamlibrary.org/Bookends-2016-Nov-Dec.pdf

TIRELESS VOLUNTEERS
The library is deeply grateful to all its volunteers who gave their talents and time over the past year. Volunteers have helped with a host of projects, events, tasks, and work assignments, such as shifting shelves to make more space for the collection, tracking down improperly shelved materials, reorganizing the media collection, helping set up and support events and lending a hand at Children’s Room Story Hours and Summer Reading Club. They create a welcoming environment for our younger patrons, which ensures our youngest citizens will have a foundation that fosters a lifelong love of libraries, reading and community.

Youth volunteers helped with craft project setup and assisted at events such as Legopalooza and Reading Friendzy. A beloved member of the community, Stephen Schnakenberg, was honored with the 2016 Mayors’ Volunteer of the Year award in recognition of his many years volunteering as a storyteller in the Children’s Room.

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<th>Type of Volunteer Service</th>
<th># of Volunteers</th>
<th># of Service Hours</th>
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<tr>
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<td>344</td>
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<td>National Honor Society</td>
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<td>Reading Club</td>
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<td>Teen</td>
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LEADERSHIP
The sustained growth and security of the Library of The Chathams would not be possible without the dedication and visionary leadership of our esteemed Board of Trustees. Thank you to all who served us so well in 2016.

APPOINTED TRUSTEES
Fredric Pocci, President
Peggy Nelson, Vice President
Andrew Hollander, Secretary
Bridget Polanin, Treasurer
Susan Allen, Trustee
Barb Montague, Treasurer

ELECTED TRUSTEES
Bruce Harris, Borough Mayor
Kevin Sullivan, Township Deputy Mayor

JOINT TRUSTEES
Danielle Dagounis
Supervisor of Instructional & Design Technology (K-12)

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