



## Annual Report 2022

### OUR MISSION

*More than a place for books, Library of the Chathams provides resources that support valuable opportunities to build knowledge, culture and social experiences that enrich lives.*

In 2022, Library of the Chathams gradually resumed normal, pre-pandemic operations. In order to fulfill our mission, we continually revamped our programs, processes, and policies with the goal of enriching the lives of our community members. This resulted in a significant increase in the number of programs for all ages and in attendance which returned to pre-pandemic levels. The library building was also used by a large number of Chatham community groups.

### 2022 LIBRARY USAGE SNAPSHOT

- 319,500 visits to the library
- 258,664 items borrowed, including 35,024 downloadable items
- 26,008 questions answered at the reference desk
- 33,564 database searches
- 16,040 uses of the library Wi-Fi (the first time we are able to report this statistic)
- 269,659 visits to the library website
- 243,261 uses of the library mobile app

### ADDING TO THE SHELVES

There was an interruption in supply when our longtime vendor Baker & Taylor was hacked. This led us to try another supplier, Ingram, and we now use both companies. We added 4,092 adult books (including 336 e-Books), 617 teen books, 1,976 children's books, and 975 audiovisual items to our collection.

## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

The year 2022 saw a large increase in the number of programs offered for all ages as well as a big increase in attendance. This increase reflects the fact that the community was happy to return to the library for in-person events as the pandemic receded. It is also due to two new developments in our library programming: the hiring of professional organizers of adult programs and our joining the Library Speakers Consortium, of which we are a founding member.

In total, 904 library programs attracted 17,874 participants – double last year’s total! Adding in community events, the number of participants was 20,796. In 2022, despite lingering COVID concerns, program attendance was on par with pre-pandemic levels.

- 336 adult programs with 4,796 participants
- 31 all-age programs with 905 participants
- 406 children’s programs with 10,900 participants
- 131 teen programs with 1,273 participants
- 323 community group meetings with 2,922 attendees
- 560 children signed up for Summer Reading Club; they read 9,020 books!

## YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMMING

2022 was a year of learning, connecting, and growing for the Youth Services Department. The children’s room was packed in the mornings for Ms. Najia’s Storytime and later in the day with elementary school students who wanted a quiet place to do homework with friends. After not being together for so long, many young children had their first interactions with other youngsters at the library!

Thursday morning programs were as popular as ever. We saw over 100 people at some sessions of “Yoga Storytime with Miss Jenn,” “Boogie Woogie Babies,” “Miss Carol Dance,” and “Music & Movement with Miss Susan.” “Read to Therapy Dogs” returned as did Paper Mill Playhouse.



*Members of the Summer Reading Club celebrated their reading accomplishments at a picnic behind the library.*



With help from those who donated to the “Save the Mural” Kickstarter campaign, to the Friends of the Library, and to the Cultural Committee of the Chathams, we began a new series of monthly programs for children focusing on different cultures. Each month, participants “visited” a country represented in our Benigno Room mural painted by Chatham’s own children’s book author/illustrator Michael Rex. School librarians led these programs in which children played games, made crafts related to countries all over the globe, and sampled ethnic cuisine.

The Summer Reading Club was fully in-person this year with 560 children reporting on 9,020 books. Ninety-eight teen volunteers put in 532 hours listening to children’s book reports.

Once again, our CS Base Summer Coding Camp was a huge success! Over 100 attendees were taught computer science skills by teams of dedicated Chatham High School volunteers. State Senator Jon Bramnick and Assemblywoman Nancy Munoz visited and encouraged students to continue their computer science journeys. CS Base also offered popular coding programs throughout the year including Java, Python and Robotics.



*Students at the CS Base Coding Camp demonstrate their coding accomplishments to Chatham Township Mayor Ashley Felice (far right) and Administrator Ziad Shehady (center).*

*Chatham Borough Council President Irene Treloar (rear) chats with Ishir Rao, the high school volunteer who is the organizing force behind CS Base Summer Coding Camp.*



## ADULT PROGRAMMING

### 2022 Program Highlights

- The Chatham Historical Society and Chatham Township Historical Society both presented fascinating programs spanning a wide range of topics from local to national history. Offered in hybrid format—in person and on Zoom—examples included “Famous & Forgotten Wrecks of the Jersey Shore,” “Water, Water Everywhere: The Making of the Chathams,” and “Stories of Our Veterans.”
- The Library Speakers Consortium presented 18 talks over the second half of the year with big-name authors and New York Times bestsellers such as Alka Joshi, David Allen, Liz Moore, Bonnie Garmus, Geraldine Brooks, and Fredrik Backman.
- Our new event planning company, O’Mealia Signature Events, brought the library’s programming for adults to a new level and received high praise from attendees. Examples of their programs included a series of lectures on genealogy; wine tasting events with a professional wine buyer and journalist; programs on food and holiday hosting; art lectures; and a chili cook-off competition!
- The Mahjong Club became firmly established as a weekly social and entertainment activity.
- ESL continued to attract students wishing to learn English as their second language.
- VITA tax volunteers were at capacity with their appointments.
- Our monthly Book Group transitioned back to in-person meetings.
- We hosted programs on World Religions—Judaism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity—all taught by college professors.
- The Wellness Initiative offered a series of programs with individual counseling, support groups, and stress reduction classes such as Yoga, Tai Chi, and meditation.
- Art shows at the library came back in full force. The Friends of the Library sponsored eight art shows by groups such as Essex Water Color Club, Drew Art Association, Waterworks, New Jersey Art Association, as well as individual shows by artists Peggy Dressel, Medy Bozkurtian, Mary Dierson Galantich, and Ida Picker.





## TEEN PROGRAMMING

We welcomed a new Emerging Technologies/Teen Librarian to our team, and teen programming grew exponentially in 2022. Program highlights included “Tasty Tuesdays,” a new cooking program, and art programs. Both are serving a population that can be hard to attract to the library. The Dungeons and Dragons Club met every Thursday, continued to add members, and provided an environment where members could feel safe. Our teen librarian also helped create a more welcoming space for teens. This space is now used daily for collaborative work, playing video games, and making dance videos.

## REFERENCE SERVICES

The library’s reference services are fully back to normal. We provided 26,008 answers to reference questions, requests to reserve a book, computer help and other services at the Information Desk. In addition, the library’s notaries served 284 patrons.

In 2022, we added some exciting databases to our already extensive roster. They include The Northeast Newspapers Collection; FindMyPast for those of British and Irish ancestry who want to research their family roots; the vast journal collection JSTOR; and Artstor, a depository of art content.



Thank you to these local groups for supporting our 2022 programming:

The Friends of the Library

Chatham-Madison Kiwanis

Chatham Jaycees

Ann L. Buesing Children’s Fund for the  
Library of the Chathams of the Community Foundation of New Jersey

Marlee and Carl Frahn Fund for the Library of the Chathams of the  
Community Foundation of New Jersey



## CODA TASK FORCE AT WORK

### Coming Out of the Dark Ages @ Library of the Chathams

With the goal of making the library a more welcoming place than ever, the CODA taskforce was formed in 2021 to remove barriers and eliminate outdated practices. Some of CODA's 2022 accomplishments include:

- In May 2022, Library of the Chathams eliminated overdue fines for all materials that belong to our library. Materials owned by other libraries may still be subject to fines, but more and more libraries are following our example.
- We changed the circulation period for all materials to 14 days. Combined with automatic renewals implemented earlier, this makes it very easy for patrons to remember the due dates and have them extended when needed.
- The change of expiration dates of library cards from three to ten years, started in late 2021 but fully implemented in 2022, reduced unnecessary frustration when patrons tried to check out materials only to find their card had expired. This is especially relevant for remote checkouts of downloadable books and movies, when the patrons may not even be in town to renew their cards.



*Chatham Borough Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz (left) and Chatham Township Committee Member Mark Lois (right) introduced the welcome banner project in April. [See photo on facing page.]*

## COMMUNITY GROUP MEETINGS HELD AT THE LIBRARY

The use of the library by community groups has also returned to pre-COVID levels. These are some groups that used the library in 2022:

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority  
Brownies – various troops  
Chatham Antiques Club  
Chatham Board of Education  
Chatham Boy Scouts – various troops  
Chatham Brass  
Chatham Cub Scouts – various packs  
Chatham Community Garden  
Chatham Community Players  
Chatham Democrats  
Chatham Education Foundation  
Chatham Girl Scouts – various troops

Chatham PTO – various groups  
Chatham Republicans  
Chatham SEPAG (special ed parents' group)  
Garden State Quilters Guild  
Jack and Jill of America  
John Taylor Babbitt Foundation  
League of Women Voters-Morristown area  
Madison Chatham Adult School  
Morris County Literacy Volunteers  
Parents Support Group of NJ  
Sprout House  
Toastmasters International

## THE LIBRARY BUILDING



### ***BRIDGING SPACE TO PLACE PROJECT***

In 2014, the Library Board of Trustees recognized that the library needed to replace aging infrastructure as well as create modern spaces to meet community needs in the library.

We submitted two applications for the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act Grant. Like the majority of libraries that applied, we did not win funding.

Library of the Chathams had undertaken years of capital campaign fundraising prior to those applications and raised \$2,093,000 toward the cost of the project, which has increased since the library first made a capital request to our towns in 2014.

We are excited that the Board of Trustees has now identified a Phase 1 that can be constructed in 2023: The Teen Center and rear entrance improvements. These portions of the *Bridging Space to Place* construction project received a grant and restricted donor funding. Possible Phases 2-5 are not yet determined. It is the goal of the Board of Trustees to complete them at once if funding can be obtained.

Costs continue to increase exponentially and so in late 2022, we requested funding for the balance of the project—now estimated to require \$5.5 million more than the initial request. The library is attempting to break that cost into phases. Correcting the humidity problems which the library has experienced since 2017 requires portions of the project to be done and is a priority going forward. The longer we delay, the more the cost escalates.



## LIBRARY SUPPORTERS

Funding from our towns is not enough to cover all the costs of running a modern library and its various programs. Some of our programs and resources are made possible by Friends of the Library and library fundraising efforts. Whether you give to the library or the Friends, you help provide services and resources our community would otherwise lack. The communities of our two towns have been very generous to the library – see the latest annual list of donors at [chathamlibrary.org/donors-2021-2022](https://chathamlibrary.org/donors-2021-2022).

## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Library continue to support the library with funds that they generate primarily through their spectacular and very labor-intensive books sales. In 2022, the Annual March Book Sale generated \$30,000 and the Holiday Book Sale \$2,900. The Friends used these funds to sponsor the majority of the library's children's programs, as well as some teen and adult programs. The most popular adult offerings include museum passes and membership in the Library Speakers Consortium. Thank you, Friends!



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

We thank the members of our 2022 Board of Trustees for their service during a year filled with positive developments, growth, and progress on multiple fronts. We look forward to working under the leadership of the 2023 Board.

### 2022 Board of Trustees

Andy Hollander, President	Lynn Magrane, Trustee
Kevin Sullivan, Vice President	Christina Mott, Trustee
Susan M. Allen, Secretary	Thaddeus J. Kobylarz, Borough Mayor
Barb Montague, Treasurer	Mark Hamilton, Township Representative
Danielle Dagounis, Superintendent's Alternate	