

**March 2023 Whiting Library  
Report to the Board of Trustees  
Submitted for April 11, 2023 Meeting by Pamela Johnson-Spurlock**

**Library Use Statistics for March:**

In March the library building was opened for 15 days, serving 1198 patrons in-person, 50 with interlibrary loan requests, 34 with computer use and 56 technology questions, and 38 with reference questions. There were 795 physical items in circulation and 336 digital items accessed through GMLC, for a total of 1181 circulating items in March. There were 29 new print items and 4 visual items added to the adult collection this month. Withdrawn items were 143 paperbacks and 85 biographies for a total of 228 items withdrawn. We had 28 new patrons sign up for library cards. That is 79 so far this year! We had 3 home deliveries. Pretty good for a month where we had 3 snow days and lost power for a few days! With an increase in usage, a door counter has been added to the ground level entrance so we can more accurately track foot traffic in and out of that door.

**Library Happenings:**

The book club is still remaining strong with 5 members attending during March. They are reading *Team of Rivals* for the months of April and May. We had our Penny University social coffee hour this month with 5 people attending and Nena Nedfeldt from the Chester-Andover Family Center as our special guest. A Gaming Club for teens and adults has started with volunteers running the program. They meet weekly on Tuesdays and have had a strong interest for the first two meetings. In addition, another group has created a Pokemon club open to all on Friday afternoons. The Southern Vermont Astronomy Group is hosting a 4 part seminar series on Friday evenings at the library. The first two happened on March 24 and 31 with a total of 35 people attending. Windsor County Mentors held an open information session on March 8 with 3 people attending. In addition, Vermont Representative Heather Chase was here on Saturday, March 25 with 7 people attending. We had 2 patrons scheduled time for Tech Help. We had book displays for Poetry Month and also Irish-American Heritage Month. March was Youth Art Month and we had an incredible exhibit of Green Mountain Union High School student art in the Suzy Forlie Memorial Reading Room.

**Library Capital Improvements and Budget Increase Requests:**

I met with Renata Sawyer of SVT Cleaning and Property Management, a local Chester cleaning company, in March. This is also the company who cleans the town offices and public safety building. Having seen the lack of cleaning and maintenance that has happened in the library building, it is in the best interest of the library to have more thorough, regular cleanings to help maintain the building and collection. After talking with Julie, it was recommended that the library board request a change in the 2023 budget. If the library were able to have SVT Cleaning and Property Management start the week of June 5, 2023, we would need to request an additional **\$4800** to reflect this. This would include an initial deep clean and weekly cleanings. The library is experiencing an increase in traffic and the current cleaning schedule of twice a month with minimal cleaning is not sufficient. This could be requested as part of our strategic capital improvements for this year and then will be properly reflected for next year's budget.

The library will be moving to a new library management software by August! The library is working with VOKEL and the vendor ByWaterSolutions to upgrade the library to Koha and join the VOKEL consortium! With the additional cost of migrating to the new system, the board should request an increase of **\$2000** to the budget for equipment and technology line item budget. This does not include the cost of new technology equipment upgrades as we are awaiting those numbers from Larry Traineau, our IT consultant.

I met with Julie Hance, Chester Town Manager, on March 17th and we discussed Capital Improvement plans as there is about \$26.4 million in grants for library capital improvement projects. The Town views the 3 following project groupings as priority and projects that are most likely to receive grant funding:

Project 1: Sprinkler, Fire alarm panel, Ground level ceiling and lights, camera system throughout = \$95,000

Project 2: Handicap Access Front and Back with roof, parking area = \$120,000

Project 3: Air Conditioning/Dehumidifying, create children's library space = \$60,000

The library may need to in the future request additional funds from our due to/from account to cover any costs such as carpeting, painting, and new furniture and shelving.

## **Upcoming Events:**

### **APRIL**

**Art Exhibition:** *Student art from Chester- Andover Elementary and Green Mountain Union High School will be on display in the Suzy Forlie Memorial Reading Room and throughout the library. Come see these wonderful works of art from our talented students!*

**Penny University** is sure to be fun and informational. April 14 and 28 from 4:30 - 6 PM. Come learn, enjoy a cup of coffee and tea and connect with your community!

*On April 14, local poet Susan Bourne will help us celebrate Poetry Month by creating found poetry. And yes, magnetic poetry will be used!*

*On April 28, the Chester Conservation Committee will be here to share how you may get involved and also gear up for the 54th annual Vermont Green Up Day. Come learn, enjoy a cup of coffee and tea, and connect with your community!*

## **SOVERA Astronomy Series Continues**

**How do we Know what we Know? April 7 @ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm**

*Rick Hunter will begin to answer the question: "How can we really start to know anything about what at first glance appears as only some very small, quite faint (few exceptions: planets, moon and sun) dots in the night sky?" As recently as 1840 Auguste Comte, a French philosopher, said nothing*

could ever be known about the composition of the stars. Meanwhile, Joseph von Fraunhofer had, about 30 years before, already laid the groundwork of spectroscopy, as well as building some of the best refracting telescopes to that time. In 1838 Friedrich Bessel was able to find the first accurate distance to a nearby star. The work of these two began the process of classifying stars, finding their distances, brightnesses, sizes, and makeup. It's another one of those famous "detective stories" 'in science, with a fascinating cast of characters! Distance is the "perpetrator," scientists the sleuths.

### **Telescope Basics + Using the Whiting Telescope April 14 @ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm**

SoVerA members will review basic optics, how to choose a telescope, and how to enjoy the Whiting telescope, which is available to Library members to check out and use. This will be a hands-on demonstration and discussion open to anyone, and especially those who may have an interest in using the telescope. Participants will learn about basic optics, how to find things in the sky, and how to adjust the various thingy-bobs on the telescope. No prior experience required.

### **NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK - April 23-29, 2023**

Come into the library for National Library Week and put your name into a raffle to win a puzzle for book lovers! Don't forget to check out the Book Sale on Friday and Saturday of this week!

### **Fill-a-Bag Book Sale**

The library trustees are holding a Fill-a-bag Book Sale Friday, April 28 and Saturday, April 29 in the Book Sale room. Fill a provided grocery bag from Smitty's Chester Market for only \$5! All proceeds go to benefit the library's collection and programs.

### **MAY**

(Board Books for Babes and 1000 Books Before Kindergarten will kick off at the end of this month thanks to our grant from CLiF.)

**Art Exhibition:** The Stone Village Art Guild will be showcasing their work in the Suzy Forlie Memorial Reading Room for the month of May. Please come look at the amazing works of local artists!

### **54th Green Up Day Vermont- Saturday, May 6**

Come into the library for your Green Up Day bags thanks to the Chester Conservation Commission! The library will be holding a raffle for a kitchen counter compost bin. Come pick up your Green Up Bag and enter for the raffle.

**Penny University** is all about art of fashion and radio. May 12 and 19 from 4:30 - 6 PM. Come learn, enjoy a cup of coffee and tea, and connect with your community!

On May 12, local resident Karen "Ren: Antonowicz will be here to share one of her Fashion Era presentations. Ren received her Master's Degree in Textiles, Fashion Merchandising, and Design, with a concentration in Historic Costume & Textiles from the University of RI. She then

*taught History of Fashion and other courses full time at the college level for 13 years, and taught part time in the CE Program at the RI School of Design.*

*On May 19, WOOL (91.5 FM, "Black Sheep Radio") will be at the library! Black Sheep Radio is a radio station broadcasting a Freeform music and talk format. Come learn how to get involved!*

Penny University is taking a Summer Break and will come back in September. Be sure to check out upcoming events at [whitinglibrary.org](http://whitinglibrary.org).