

## Heermance Memorial Library

### 2021 Annual Report to the Community

#### Heermance Memorial Library 2021 Annual Report (looking back)

Presented by Library Director Catherine Benson, on September 13, 2022, 7pm at the Coxsackie Town Hall to Supervisor, Richard Hanse; Councilman Tom Burke; Councilman Patrick Kennedy; Councilman Michael Veeder; Councilwoman Linda Wilkinson; & Town Clerk Bambi Hotaling, to members of the public & to members of the Library Board of Trustees.

In 2021:

- Dec 8, 2020-April 26, 2021. From monitoring the high infection rate in Greene County due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the library only had staff inside the building. When we reopened in April, we continued with curbside service in addition to having people inside the library. It's a practice we still continue due to patron requests.
- We followed New York State and CDC guidelines for cleaning protocols, daily health screenings, social distancing, along with face coverings required by all staff, patrons and library program attendees. In the first quarter, we quarantined incoming library materials for 3 days, with gloves and hand sanitizer available, masks worn, and staff was encouraged to wash hands frequently.
- Our board meetings were held online, with the governor amending deadlines to the NYS Open Meetings Law.
- While we were not open to the public, we accomplished renovations to the library, after our applications to the Village of Coxsackie Historical Committee were approved and public hearings were held.
- For Building and Grounds, the porch steps and top facade were replaced; the rear addition had wider gutters installed; roofs on the front & side porches were replaced, all due to water damage.
- Thanks to a grant we received for technology, we installed a Scan Station, Mobile Printing and payment tower. Documents can be translated into Word and then printed or emailed.
- We supported public libraries during Advocacy Week, meeting our state representatives online with the *message, Invest in Libraries.*

- We promoted the Libby app for patrons to access eMagazines from our library and there are over 3,400 magazines online for us to access.
- Our library participated in the Turning Outward program and gave us an outline, to help us question, listen and learn more about our community, rather than guessing what they want. The responses from the survey drove future programming for 2022.
- The library is enrolled as a community partner with the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) for the Emergency Broadband Benefit from Congress.
- Through the American Rescue Plan Act, Mid-Hudson Library System received a grant enabling us to extend our Wi-Fi further in the parking lot.
- To help keep our library vital to the community, we offered The Big Read on several titles throughout the year for ebooks and audiobooks for a shared experience and to promote discussion.
- Overdrive has also provided us with free access for simultaneous reading and audiobooks from their curated list of 51 titles from their Social and Emotional Learning Collection.
- The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled has implemented changes to the application certification process, making it easier for individuals with reading disabilities to apply for Talking Book and Braille Library service. Now, librarians, social workers, school psychologists, counselors, reading specialists, speech pathologists, and educators may certify the eligibility of applicants with reading disabilities. The library has loaner equipment for it, if you'd like to see it, but individuals may apply directly to NLS or the NYS Talking Book and Braille Library in Albany.
- A replacement copier was installed.
- We held art workshops taught by local artists with the CREATE grant the library awarded last year and was rescheduled for this year. Class sizes have been reduced, for social distancing and protocols are in place for safety: hand sanitizer available, contact tracing at entrance, open window with fan to circulate air, tables and chairs are wiped clean for each of the classes.
- A Healthcare Consortium representative continues to visit once a month, offering the public appointments to shop for healthcare offered through the NYS Health Marketplace.

- We partnered with The Greene County Rural Health Network as a weigh-in location for participants for The Biggest Loser.
- The library reopened April 26. Curbside service is still offered. Public now has access to the additional following services: checkout at the circulation desk; access to browse the collection; public computer access; in-person support for reference; public access to study areas; programming.
- Advertisement for the news of reopening placed on marquis at the National Bank of Coxsackie; Village of Coxsackie, State Telephone.
- We are meeting the state's minimum standards for our town's population of being open at least 35 hours per week. We're open 36 hours per week.
- We were awarded the 2021 Greene County Initiative Program (CIP), a grant through CREATE, Greene County Council on the Arts dba CREATE Council, funding for art classes.
- Summer Reading Program for 2021 offered online reading logs, take away crafts, and programming for all ages.
- The microburst in the Village of Coxsackie caused numerous trees to fall on the library property. The light pole at the bottom of the parking lot was bent. We had a ceiling leak. The cistern walls were compromised by the roots of the large pine that fell.
- Friends of the Heermance Memorial Library sponsor Trivia Nights at the Cask & Rasher.
- Red's Restaurant hosted a fundraiser on behalf of the library August 11, with 10% of food and beverage sales donated to the library.
- Summer Reading Program Finale Party at gazebo featuring Sharon's Music in Motion and storytime with Ms. Terry was well attended. Stewart's ice cream certificates were passed out for the culminating event to participants.
- The Village of Coxsackie Public Works Department installed a water shut off valve at street level on Ely Street and John Halsted installed a water shut off valve and installed a water filter in the basement.
- Sitcer Construction fixed the gutter that needed flashing which caused the ceiling leak.
- Lighting updated, but the poles outside remain the same, with increased efficiency.

- We received a CREATE grant for additional art classes to be taught by local Greene County resident artists at the library.
- The shelves purchased through the grant from the Bank of Greene County were assembled and the craft room has been reorganized for better use of storage space.
- Slat wall installed in hallway for displays.
- Touchless hand soap dispensers installed in staff and public bathrooms.
- Deliveries were reimagined for COVID-19: Bethany Village outreach will be done with deliveries to the residents, not in the hall, due to the Delta variant of Covid-19, as per their management's decision for safety. Library staff delivered and picked up books to/from residents' apartments and placed holds on individual titles.
- State Telephone restored our Internet in the basement, replacing their hardware. They also repaired our phone lines, one phone and one fax number.
- Receiving positive feedback on our library's new website design from patrons. Easier to navigate and find information. PayPal & smile.amazon.com info supporting the Friends updated.
- We reimagined programming: The butterflies hatched on our library porch and were released from the chrysalises we received from the Cornell Cooperative Extension monarch program.
- Inside Out art classes began with social distancing upstairs. Two people in each room placed by a window, paint with watercolors the interior and exterior views.
- Aerohive Access Points migrated to the new Extreme CloudIQ platform. These devices provide our WiFi and also count our WiFi usage.
- Tree stumps ground. Patron cleared the wood shavings for mulch.
- Internet speed increased from State Tel and a new switch was installed. The upload and download speeds vary between public computers.
- Friends Halloween Party was reimagined with distanced stations and stories and music on mats for participants in their pods.
- We have permission through December 2022 from Penguin Publishing for reading their books online for the library's YouTube videos created by Terry Rabideau to a closed audience.

- We held story times outside the library, and at the gazebo.
- Stair treads and spindles replaced on the front porch by Matt Pacuk. Painted on all sides before installation.
- Kool Temp visited to verify the furnace is operating properly.
- The repaired lamp post was rewelded by Kyle Garland, and then reinstalled by Barry Rausch and Don Daoust with assistance from State Tel.
- We participated in the statewide Great Give Back during the month of October. We collected items for Hope's Mission Backpack Program in lieu of our library's fines.
- Christmas by the River was tremendously successful, taking place outdoors with the silent wreath auction and StoryWalk® created for the event by staff and volunteers.
- Exterior Painting completed by KevMark.
- Air conditioning installed upstairs by C.A. Albright & Sons
- Bullock Electric did electrical work upstairs, adding lights and switches to rooms, adding another electrical box to the upstairs kitchen, and for upstairs air-conditioning.
- Lighting: Lime Energy – Osterhout Electric of Hyde Park installed the energy efficient LED lights for the exterior lamp posts and the interior fluorescent bulbs were switched also. This installation was done through an incentive by Central Hudson to lower our electrical costs.
- The MHLS Outreach Mini-Grant: We purchased additional large print books, clear totes, push cart and barcode scanner for use as a mobile library.

Thank you to these organizations for their generous support: The Friends of the Library, National Bank of Coxsackie, Hover Foundation; Greene County Legislature, Stewart's Shops, CREATE Council on the Arts, Bank of Greene County, State Telephone, and the Village of Coxsackie. Thank you to the many volunteers who generously donated their time and efforts in different ways to the library this past year.

**2023 Budget is presented to the Town Board for \$290,970.** It should be noted that many library board committees had input on this budget and we kept the budget tight for next year. Looking at the fiscal climate our society faces, the library cannot rely on getting grants and donations as we have in the past, so they are not included in the projected budget.

The Heermance Memorial Library budget for 2023 is increasing. The NYS minimum wage rate is going up and if we want to attract and keep good help, we need to increase salaries and benefits, because we appreciate what they accomplish every day, in addition, checking patrons selections in and out, reshelving, cataloging, creating engaging programs, running a concierge service, by placing titles on hold for regular patrons for items that patrons may be interested in reading or watching. Staff is available to assist the public to make copies, print from their phones, from email or texts, register for ID.gov, fax, scan, download and use the library app Libby. We help the public with digital navigation.

How much for a household assessed at \$100,000? The library tax would be \$62.66. This is an increase of \$2.65 than last year. With minimum wage increasing, inflation up, and utility costs rising, **we have to increase our budget for the first time in 3 years**. Our energy costs have increased, as has everyone else's. At the end of August, we already reached this year's budgeted amount for electricity cost.

**Library Election will take place Tuesday, October 4.** Absentee ballots are available.

**Staff:**

Catherine Benson (Director)  
Jennifer Grounds  
Christine Reda  
Lynn Erceg  
Maureen Hanse  
Jacqueline Whitbeck  
Betty Bigler  
Terry Rabideau  
Mary Donahue

**Board of Trustees:**

Carol Serazio  
Charles Hailer  
Mark Maraglio  
Colleen Walsh  
Catherine Beecher  
Marilyn Rausch  
Joseph Garland IV  
Lydia Okrent  
Laura Shauger

We work to increase the visibility, accessibility, relevance, and use of the library by listening to, and building, authentic connections with the people and organizations in our community. We monitor trends in library services, participate in professional development, apply for grants and seek opportunities to provide your library with additional strategies to fulfill new library services, while assessing new ways to deliver existing services.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Catherine Benson, Library Director