



2020-2021 REPORT

When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down our building in March of 2020, we didn't realize how drastically the way we did things would change—and how much of that change would be positive.

With our physical space closed, we pivoted to remote services and ramped up our digital offerings of eBooks, audiobooks and streaming movies. We provided notarization through videoconferencing, notarizing more than 1600 documents virtually and in person over two years. Programs moved online, which enabled us to partner with other libraries to co-sponsor a wider variety of events. We began posting rich resource lists—first of pandemic information and soon for all sorts of educational and social themes, from anti-racism to Earth Day to Pride Month. Summer reading moved online, with prizes supporting local businesses such as Double Rainbow, 4 Corners Pizza, and Little Bird Cookies.

When we were allowed to return to our building, we created curbside services so that patrons could “take-out” books and movies contact-free, like they did from their favorite restaurants. Story time and other children's programming was moved outdoors, and we posted some of our largest attendance records ever. We completed the renovation of the four bathrooms in the Library, which was funded by a New York State Construction Grant. The Trustees finished an extensive update to the Library's five year plan-of-service. And the Friends of the Town of Pelham Public Library held the most successful novel night ever in October of 2021, after having to postpone the event for a year.

In 2021, longtime library Director Patricia Perito retired, and Managing Librarian Augusta Turner took over leadership. Augusta moved to Pelham in 1995 with her husband and four children. She received her undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Southern California and her master's degree in library science from Queens College. Augusta has worked full time at the Library since 2014, and she is excited about identifying new ways to meet the needs of the community. Despite the challenges we faced in 2020-2021, the Library grew in ways that we would never have imagined.



New Library Director Augusta Turner with her dog, Dewey (as in decimal system, which yes libraries still use!)



2020-21 Highlights

PROGRAMS

Adult programs ranged from book clubs; meditation and yoga, arts and crafts and job workshops, Medicare information sessions, local history and community engagement. We also partnered with Pelham Together, EcoPel and the Junior League of Pelham for town-wide events. Given the success of our adult programs on Zoom, we plan to continue online events after the pandemic. In 2021, we were awarded a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts and ArtsWestchester to host a live ice sculpting performance of a 4-foot tall ice pelican, which was attended by 250 people. Children's programs moved outdoors with more than 100 people attending some of our story times. Our K-Day program, in which we welcome new kindergarteners and their families to get their first library card, broke all records with 350 people in attendance.



THE eLIBRARY

At the height of the pandemic, use of eBooks increased by more than 400 percent, largely through the ease of use of the Libby app. Our eLibrary continued to grow even after our building reopened and patrons had access to physical materials. The Library added more than 125,000 new

electronic materials to our collection during the last two years, and use of eBooks alone rose ten percent from 2020 to 2021. Total use of downloadable books, audiobooks, movies and databases more than doubled from 14,543 in 2019 to 33,898 in 2021. Going forward, we will continue to build out our digital offerings but also maintain our focus on curating the Library's physical book collection, constantly adding new titles to meet the recreational, educational and informational interests of our community.

The Library staff issued 492 new library cards in 2021, bringing the total number of library card holders to 6,504.

New Faces In the Library

You may have noticed some new faces helping patrons and leading our popular outdoor story times for children. We'd like to officially welcome our two new librarians, Tasha Gross and Florence Simunyola. Tasha Gross (below left) grew up in Northern Westchester and got their master's in library and information sciences at University of Washington in Seattle in 2021. Florence Simunyola (pictured at right) got her bachelor's



degree in library science and development studies at the University of Zambia in 2014. In 2020, she earned her master's degree in library science from Queens College with a specialized certificate in children's and YA services. We'd also like to give a warm welcome to Marcia Edelstein and Erin Maloney who joined the staff as clerks on the circulation desk. Marcia and Erin both live in Pelham.





About the Library

BUDGET

As a non-profit, municipal library, the Library is funded primarily by taxes collected by the Town of Pelham. In 2021, the Town appropriated \$667,758 for the Library—89 percent of its \$747,791 operating budget. We were fortunate to receive a number of gifts and grants, including the Friends' contribution of \$62,000—our biggest gift in 2021 and 8.3 % of the budget.

We thank the Friends in particular for the unbelievable creativity used in designing safety protocols for Novel Night, which included outdoor dinners and a pre-event drive-through Covid-19 testing site in the Library's parking lot. The next Novel Night will be in Fall 2023!



Novel Night After-Party, photo by Thomas Bricker

LIBRARY STAFF

(as of 12/31/2021)

Director: Augusta Turner

Bookkeeper: Gail Vidales

Librarians: Natasha Gross, Florence Simunyola

Support Services Supervisor: Irene Kobziar

Circulation Staff: Maureen Annunziata, Marcia Edelstein, Erin Maloney, Carl Wadley, Jamice Williams

Page: George Cisneros

TRUSTEES

(as of 12/31/2021)

Catherine Campbell, Vice President

Michelle Dvorkin

Karen Fellner

Emily Gest, Secretary

Robert Gimigliano

Keith Keaveny

Jennifer Meyer

Terrence Mullan, President

Lisa Robb

Judith Shampianier

One vacancy

Town of Pelham Liaison: Maura Curtin

Town Supervisor: Dan McLaughlin

An 11-member board governs the Library. We wish to thank Sandy Angevine and Margaret Breuninger for their service and welcome new trustee Michelle Dvorkin.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Library Director Augusta Turner at 914-738-1234. The Library welcomes feedback from the community!



TOWN OF PELHAM
PUBLIC LIBRARY

530 Colonial Avenue, Pelham, New York 10803
(914) 738-1234 • pelhamlibrary.org



The Library by the Numbers



Programs

252

Programs in 2021,
both virtual and in person

7,667

People attended programs in 2021



eLibrary

125,000

Electronic materials added
to the Library 2019-2021

133%

Increase in use of electronic materials



Cardholder Services

492

New cards issued,
bringing the total to over 6,500

1,676

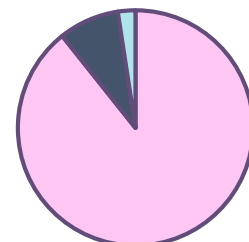
Documents notarized in 2020-2021
for members of the community



Budget

\$747,791

total annual budget



■ Town ■ Friends ■ Other