

FALL 2020

PAT YOURSELVES ON THE BACK, FRIENDS

It is through your generous donations that many programs have been created and executed during this challenging time of the coronavirus.

The Lewiston Public Library staff has been nothing less than extraordinary. Marcela Peres has pored through rules and regulations provided by the Maine State Library figuring out on an almost daily basis how to serve our community while keeping all concerned—her staff and the public—safe. The librarians have created an amazing array of online programming to keep readers of all ages engaged and active. In September, the offerings expanded to Virtual Story Time, Teen and Kid Book Boxes, and the *Great Falls Forum*. Patrons will continue to be able to sign up for computer time.

Now is the time to give as generously as possible to continue the hard work that will have to come for the foreseeable future.

Anne Kemper, President
Friends of the Lewiston Public Library

THE WORK OF LEWISTON PUBLIC LIBRARY INCLUDES YOU

Renew Your Membership

Included in this Friends Focus mailing is our annual membership appeal. Please consider joining or renewing today. Your donation really makes a difference and goes directly towards expanding Library programs and resources for the entire community.

Did you know that you can make a one-time or recurring donation through PayPal on the Library website? Visit <http://lplonline.org/about/support-the-library/friends/> to find out more.

Use Smile.Amazon.com

From Smile.Amazon.com type in 'Lewiston Public Library' as an organization to support. A small donation from each sale will come to the Friends. It will not add one penny to the cost of your purchase!

Friends Pandemic Assistance

The Library and the City of Lewiston made the difficult decision to close the Library in the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Your Friends funds enabled the Library to upgrade its email newsletter

and purchase a professional-level Zoom account. The email upgrade allowed staff to begin sending a weekly email newsletter to keep the community apprised of programs and the status of Library services. Zoom allowed LPL to be one of the first libraries to successfully migrate programming to the virtual world.

Lewiston Public Library during COVID-19

Library staff worked from home for six weeks this spring, and found creative ways to bring LPL to life beyond the building.

Children's Department staff recorded or hosted live virtual programs: *Maine-ly Stories* in celebration of Maine's bicentennial, and *Outdoor Stories* where picture books were read from a variety of locations. Even our littlest patrons were able to participate through Preschool Singalongs. Programs were viewed over 6,000 times on Facebook. Teen programming included live read-alouds of popular books, viewed over 3,000 times on social media. Adult programs, on Facebook and YouTube, included a National Poetry Month video series featuring Maine poets reading their work. These videos were viewed almost 11,000 times. Other programs included *Art Attack* (a DIY craft tutorial series), a read-aloud of *The Little Prince* in French and English. We began a new series: *Behind the Scenes @ LPL*, giving Library patrons tours of changes in the Library space and procedures.

Summer Reading was a resounding success! About 50 teens and adults participated in Summer Reading through paper logs or by tracking reading on the Beanstack app. The Children's Department gave away over 400 "make and take" literacy and activity kits, and more than 350 free books to families, (courtesy of our Friends funds!). Summer saw the return of Storytime, held virtually over Zoom.

The Great Falls Forum series is taking place through Zoom. Participants watch by registering online, or watch via Facebook Live. You can also view it afterward on the Library's YouTube channel. The first two *Forums* have been watched over 200 times.

LPL To Go, the Library's curbside lending program, has seen over 1,700 appointments since late June. As of late October, LPL is open for computer sessions and by appointment for small groups of five in the

Children's Room. Our staff has been thrilled to welcome back patrons through these services, and we look forward to more when additional services can be safely restored.

In order to keep staff and the public safe, community members are asked to: 1) refrain from visiting the Library if they feel sick; 2) wear face coverings over mouth and nose while inside the building; 3) limit visits to 1 hour or less; 4) maintain at least 6 feet physical distance from other people; 5) limit the number of people (especially small children) AND personal belongings; 6) keep food or drink outside.

Children's Author Events for 2020

In February 2020, the Children's Department hosted a Raggedy Ann & Andy PJ Party, led by Karen Richards Toothaker, a local author. Every child in attendance was able to take home their own copy of Toothaker's book, *The Rag Doll Gift*, courtesy of the Friends of the Library. Later in February, LPL Kids welcomed Maine author Samara Cole Doyon, author of *Magnificent Homespun Brown*. Every child in attendance at this event took home a signed copy, also courtesy of the Friends of the Library.

Changes—in the Children's Department

January 2020, the Children's Department welcomed Ivy Moser as its newest full-time Library Technician. Ivy has worked as a teacher and case worker in a community rehabilitation organization. She was also an English teacher in Japan for nine years before that. In Ivy's free time, she likes to read (of course!) and is also a hiker, photographer, and writer.

After a year full-time with the Library, Sara Groves will continue some of her great work at LPL part-time in the Children's department, so keep an eye out for her friendly face!

Our new Children's Librarian, Sara Turner, joined LPL in October from her position as Youth Services Manager at the Osceola Library System in Orlando, Florida. There she oversaw youth programming across five library branches. Her years of library experience include working with youth, and programming which included STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math). She also built sensory inclusive library spaces. She excels at building community/school partnerships and growing services to kids and families. Please welcome her when you come to visit!

LPL Zine Collection

Zines, small, handmade publications on topics ranging from travelogues and artist zines, to comics and poetry, have come to LPL! The format changes from author to author and range in scale from 10cm by 6cm to comic book size. Binding and making a zine are generally a complete Do-It-Yourself process. Volumes range from origami type folding, to staples, to hand sewing. A unique form of self-publishing for artists and everyday people, zines serve as activism, promotion, and communication in one of its rawest published forms.

LPL's Zine browsing collection *The Zine Atheneum* and its teen counterpart *A-TEEN-eum*, were established, by staff member Mike Lewis, in the summer of 2019. These collections now include over 50 unique zines from all over the country, the world, and here in Lewiston. Many were donated, others purchased thanks to the Friends of the Library. *The Zine Atheneum* and *A-TEEN-eum* are found on the second floor of the Library.

National Endowment for the Humanities Grant

Lewiston Public Library has been selected as one of six Maine cultural organizations to receive grant funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This grant supports programming operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. We were awarded \$121,846 to cover salaries for two full-time and four part-time Children's staff and remote and virtual humanities programming will be available to our youth through the end of December.

In-person youth programming at LPL will likely be one of the last services to return, since ensuring safe social distancing among children is a challenge. Staff will adapt programming to remote models, many virtual. Recognizing there are barriers to technology access in Lewiston and screen fatigue, staff will support literacy education by low-tech methods as well.

Funds have been used to convert the popular *BookReach* program, where volunteers read to children in daycares, to an online format. *Book Boxes*, subscription kits including books and themed activities, are mailed to children and teens, and virtual humanities programming is planned. *StoryWalks* will be installed throughout the community, and we're addressing the digital divide in literacy by purchasing a number of digital learning devices (that do not require an internet connection) to circulate to families through Lewiston Public Schools. 