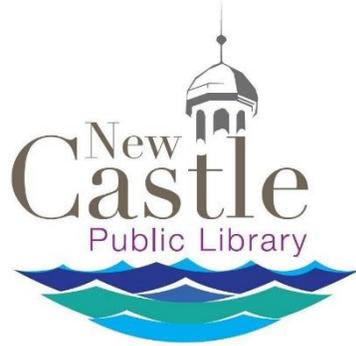


New Castle County Department of Community Services

New Castle Public Library



**FY 2020
End of Year Report
And
Goals for FY2021**

**Prepared by
Julie Kirk
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**New Castle Public Library - End of Year Report
Accomplishments for FY20 and Goals for FY21**

Mission and Vision Statement

Mission: The New Castle Public Library's mission is to facilitate the community's pursuit of knowledge and enjoyment through provision of materials, information services, access to technology and community events.

Vision: New Castle Public Library values the historic heritage and diversity of its community. We seek to engage the community in lifelong learning, provide access to established and emerging technology, and be a safe gathering place where people and ideas come together.

The staff, as ambassadors of the library, provide outstanding customer service, ensure freedom of access to information and technology and offer materials and programs that entertain and inspire.

Significant Accomplishments for the New Castle Public Library – FY2020

Facility enhancements

- HVAC controls software was upgraded to provide more control access for Modern Controls technicians and library staff.
- Elevator key for 2nd floor access was replaced due to faulty lock on the panel.
- Front door counter broke and was replaced by DDL-IT. The new one has online access for data. The back door counter is still the original one.
- Grinder pump in the sewer pit was replaced and the pit drained.
- Roof leaks still occur. Evaluation of the situation and repairs are being handled by the Trustees of New Castle Common.

Training

- Staff attended Active Shooter Training provided by New Castle City Police.
- Youth Services Librarian participated in and completed Library Juice Academy classes for early childhood literacy.
- All full time and some part time staff participated in webinars on topics such as back safety in the workplace, sexual harassment, unconscious bias, working with diverse youth volunteers, technology and how to use it, and programming.
- Library Director attended State Director's meetings, Library Town Meetings and Delaware Legislative Day.
- Library Director, Youth Services Librarian, and Principal Library Assistant attended the two-part seminar Enhanced Management Training provided by DDL.
- Library Director participated in multiple webinars to improve skills in providing feedback, hiring and interviewing, and coaching.

- Library Director and Youth Service Librarian attended Public Library Association Conference. Workshops attended focused on programming for special needs populations, fundraising, recognizing and removing barriers to library access, and early childhood and family literacy.

Partnerships

- The library was invited to partner with New Castle Courthouse Museum, National Park Service, Read House Museum, and New Castle Historical Society to plan a History Camp. The library will offer an integral part of the camp by providing the campers the opportunity and materials to create projects that will enhance their learning experience throughout the week using technology available at the library.
- The New Castle Library Friends membership remained level. They were unable to participate in fundraisers, including assistance with A Day in Old New Castle, and the annual book sale due to the pandemic. They still provided funding to the library for programs, digitizing New Castle Weekly, the walk-in collection, and other operating expenses.
- The Friends embarked on an aggressive nominating effort to expand and diversify the Friends Board. This was successful in bringing to the board many new members of differing backgrounds.
- In partnership with the Delaware Department of Education and Colonial School District, the library provided summer lunches to children age 5-18 for the sixth year. In addition, staff members attend the DOE Summer Feeding meetings for networking and idea sharing regarding the program and training by Colonial School District for the execution and administration of the program.
- Staff made multiple outreach visits to area schools to promote library programs and services to both school staff and students.
- Youth Services Librarian, Sara Thomas, continued her partnership with Ferris School. She assisted in weeding and collection development, shelving and cataloging of the main library of the school.
- The partnership with Café New Castle continued with monthly trivia being held at the Café. The program grew to include more than 30 participants each month. The Adults Who Read YA book discussion was also held at the Café monthly.
- Youth Services Librarian, Sara Thomas, is a mentor for the GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) at William Penn High School. She attends monthly meetings and provides support to the teen members.

Staff

- Library Director was invited to participate in the Council on Libraries subcommittee addressing independent library governance standards.
- Youth Services Librarian, Sara Thomas, actively participates in Delaware Library Association as Membership Chair. This is her seventh year in that position. Library Director serves on the DLA Scholarship and Awards Committee. Principal Library Assistant, Nicole Ballance, produces the DLA Bulletin.
- Staff actively participated or co-chaired in county library projects and initiatives including but not limited to 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, 500 Books Before Middle School, Longwood Garden Community Reads and Read for the Record. The library also participates in the Book Buddy program, NCC Reads, and Food for Fines. Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and Blue Hen Awards nomination committee for graphic novels are state wide initiatives.
- Adult Services Librarian, Sally Hatton, retired in May 2020 after nearly 40 years of service to the library and its community. Despite the library being closed during her last months, a celebration of her career was held on her last day. Library staff, and Sally's family were invited. Colleagues were invited to join in virtually.
- An Adult Services Librarian was hired to replace the retiring librarian. Tyler Antoine began his employment in May, 2020.
- Youth Services Librarian participated in planning the Performer's Showcase with the Delaware Division of Libraries.

Programs:

- Library hosted a Drag Queen Story Time, the first of its kind in the state. Despite much controversy, the program was attended by over 100 participants of all ages and well received.
- The 4 programs for the Revisiting the Founding Era grant were held December through February. They were well attended with the youth portion being the most well received. Boy scouts and their families attended to earn a badge.
- In conjunction with the City of New Castle's Halloween parade sponsored by the Lions Club, the library offered snacks and activities. Cookies and juice were offered from a table on the front porch, supervised by staff and volunteers. A photo booth was set up inside. Over 230 participants visited the library for the event.
- The library utilized 11 volunteers for a total of 287 hours in the first 9 months of the year. One volunteer participates in the Book Buddy Program. No volunteers were able to participate after the library closed.
- Summer Feeding program offered lunch two days per week, serving 207 meals over the 8-week period. Activities and programs were planned to supplement the meals such as

a 3-week Calcium educational program by The Food Bank and a mini carnival to celebrate the success of the summer. A New Castle County Cares grant was awarded to supplement this program. Through the grant, extra hours for the supervising staff member were scheduled, each child received a book weekly and supplemental healthy foods were made available.

- As part of the library's efforts to improve early childhood literacy, preschool story time was held twice per week. Additionally, PAWS for People, in which children read aloud to therapy dogs occurred twice per month with 2-3 dogs scheduled.
- The library hosts 4 book discussion groups for adults. Each is specific to a theme or genre to include literary works, mysteries, young adult fiction, and titles on the topic of food and culture.
- Library After Hours continues. Murder Mystery Night, Candy Corn Bingo, Candy Hearts Bingo, pumpkin carving, and gingerbread house construction are most popular.
- GED in Spanish classes continued for the ninth year. Six to twelve students attended class twice a week.
- Adults and children attended movies monthly. The adult movies include cultural awareness through the Cultural Movie Series and showings of popular, newly released films. Children and families are offered age appropriate films and pizza to snack on.
- Throughout the year, speakers from Delaware Humanities, Delaware Cooperative Extension, and area museums present programs for the adult community.
- A crossword puzzle tournament was planned for March but was postponed due to the closure of the library during the pandemic. A patron spearheaded the planning, gathered sponsors for the event, recruited volunteers, acquired the puzzles from Will Shortz, puzzle editor of The New York Times, while meeting monthly with the library director.

Library Operations

- A new accounting firm, Cover & Rossiter, was engaged for the annual financial review.
- A logo specific to New Castle Public Library was approved. It was designed pro bono by a colleague of a Friends board member.
- Contract libraries requested and were given a 3% increase in FY21 funding.
- DDL-IT upgraded all computers and laptops to Windows 10.
- The Bike Bookmobile was active throughout the summer and autumn. Activities included weekly story time in Battery Park, attending the Summer Concert Series in Battery Park, weekly visits to the senior center, and offering information and activities at the Rivertowns Festival.

- The entire adult collection, all genres, was weeded, updated, and shifted. Certain collections were moved to new locations with sci-fi being inter-shelved with fiction.
- Children's collections were weeded and relocated to allow better access for the children and improve visibility of the materials for browsing.
- Applied for and accepted the Paycheck Protection Program loan.

Challenges

- Construction and water line replacement work on Delaware St. resulted in an unexpected closure for a day. This was ongoing work that ultimately resulted in a significant decrease of metrics for the month of July, 2019.
- The donation jug at the circulation desk was stolen. A police report was made and the culprit was arrested.
- A bat was on the second floor staff area. How it got in and where it went were unknown for months. It was found in a box in the storage room and removed.
- The library closed to the public March 16, 2020 due to the pandemic.

COVID

- New Castle County installed a Wi-Fi booster to provide better access in the parking lot.
- Library director continued to work on-site throughout the quarantine period.
- Most full time staff worked from home March 16-June 1, 2020.
- Part time staff were on paid leave March 16-June 1, 2020.
- Curbside pickup of circulated items began in June.
- Virtual programming occurred throughout the period of closure.
- The library and staff collaborated with New Castle County libraries and DDL on programming for summer 2020.
- The library offered "front porch" services of free books for adults, teens, and children along with providing access to the many handouts, fliers, bookmarks, etc. with information on voting, census, bus schedules, reader's advisory, and more.
- The library continued to accept plastic bags from the community for recycling for Eco Plastic Products of Delaware with the collection bin on the front porch.
- Had Catch a Web cleaners come in for a thorough clean before staff returned to the building.
- Library director attended weekly meetings with county and state about reopening plans.
- Ordered Plexiglas shields for the main service desks in preparation of reopening to the public.

Goals for FY21

- Orientation and training of Adult Services Librarian
- Work with staff to create new opportunities for the Bike Bookmobile.
- Participate in New Castle History Summer Camp in July 2021 in partnership with New Castle Courthouse, National Park Service, New Castle Historical Society and Read House. Planning and collaboration will take place throughout the year.
- Add the non-circulating Delaware collection in the Rodney Room locked cases to the Delaware Library Catalog.
- Create and encourage team building activities to improve communication, cooperation, and foster creativity among the staff.
- Seek alternative funding opportunities to decrease the need to use reserve funds for operating expenses.

Goals for FY22

- Return the library to full operations.
- Continue with weeding to improve turnover rate.
- Create a balanced operating budget that does not use reserve funds.

Measure	FY2018	FY19	FY20	% Change	
				FY19	FY20
Hours Open	2442	2462	1723		-30.02%
User Visits	81055	72794	50684		-30.37%
Circulation	85885	77513	57357		-26.00%
Registered Patrons	7138	6788	6381		-6.00%
Reference Transactions	10825	10022	8016		-20.02%
Programs Held	566	541	504		-6.84%
Program Attendance	5116	4428	4957		11.95%
Time Used on Public Computers	15011	12713	8170		-35.74%
Wireless Use	11122	7254	2584		-64.38%

Meeting Room use	243	416	317	-23.80%
Summer Reading Club				
Registered	138	166	105	-36.75%
Completed	60	72	49	-31.94%
Completion Rate	43.48%	43.37%	46.67%	7.61%
Turnover	2.21	2.07	1.57	-31.85%