

## Hudson Falls Free Library Annual Report 2022

The Hudson Falls Free Library is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1910 serving the Hudson Falls/Kingsbury area. Main financial support for the library comes from the Hudson Falls Central School District, the Town of Kingsbury and the Village of Hudson Falls. We are part of the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) which also shares resources with the Mohawk Valley Library System (nearly 60 libraries in total).

**Mission:** Our mission is to provide quality materials and services which fulfill the educational, informational, culture and recreational needs of the entire community in an atmosphere that is welcoming and respectful.

The Hudson Falls Free Library continues to build on recent growth to offer the best materials, services and dedicated assistance to a wide variety of the community.

### **Main Accomplishments of 2022:**

- **Abolished late fees** to ensure access to library materials does not become an inequitable financial burden for our lowest income patrons.
- **Began offering Hoopla electronic content service**, a library-based streaming and downloading service, in addition to the ebooks and audio books available through the Southern Adirondack Library System.
- **Created a branded library card** with a photo of the library taken by local photographer (and Board of Trustee member) Kendall McKernon. These replaced the generic cards developed for use by libraries in the Southern Adirondack Library System. The goal of this change was to engender pride in our library and our foster community spirit.
- **Hosted our first-ever fundraising dinner**, Once Upon a Library, held at the Sandy Hill Arts Center which netted \$5,000 for the library by reaching out to businesses and individuals in the community for sponsorships and in-kind donations as well as ticket sales.
- **Visits to the library have increased:** In 2022 the library had 7,683 visitors up from 5,435 in 2021 and a pandemic-era low of 4,237 in 2020.
- **Circulation of items, both physical and electronic, was up:** Over 18,083 (15,682 physical, 1801 electronic) for 2022, from 15,812 in 2021 and 8,771 in 2020.
- **Better use of our space:** We have continued to rearrange the use of our space to better help patrons find what they're looking for. This year we shifted sections so general adult fiction books and genre books can also be found near one another

in one corner of the library. We also consolidated adult non-fiction so that patrons browsing those books do not have to range all around the building perimeter.

## Programs and Activity Highlights in 2022:

### *Children's, Family and Teens*

- **Rebuilding Attendance:** In 2022, our first full year of programs after reinstating live programming in Sept. 2021, 953 people (685 children and teens, 268 adults supporting them) attend Children's Department activities. Activities include those carried over from before the pandemic (Pokemon card game playing, Kids Crafting Corner and LEGO Challenges on the weekends) as well as some new things (like Crafter-Noon drop in Crafts on Wednesdays) and the continuation of the Teen Group (more on both those below).
- **Drop-In Activities:** Over the school break last May, we had nearly 80 children in the library due to our drop in activities over break, including creating bird feeders, a library themed scavenger hunt, making (and eating!) ice cream--our best attended day with 33 kids and teens--and experimenting with Ozobots (small coding robots). This idea of drop in activities worked so well, we implemented it into our crafting activity on Wednesday afternoons.
- **Grab and Go Bags:** Begun out of necessity in the pandemic, we have continued to make Grab and Go activities with leftover materials from art projects. Parents and caregivers appreciate this because if they can't make it to the craft, they can stop by and pick up the activity for their kids.
- **Teen Group:** We celebrated our first year of Teen Group in October with a party with snacks and games. On average 6-8 teens attend every week for fun activities and to hang out with friends.
- **Stewart's Matching Grant:** With the help of the Stewart's Matching Grant we were able to host children's performer Jumpin Jamie in a concert held at the nearby Sandy Hill Arts Center.
- **Partnerships with the Community:** In addition to the Sandy Hill Arts Center, we connected with the community in a variety of ways in 2022: participation in the Hudson Falls United Methodist Church's Back Pack Day, walking in the South Glens Falls Thanksgiving Day Parade, and bringing in members of the Upstate Model Railroaders to show off their layouts.
- **Countdown to Christmas:** We recruited community members to be filmed reading Christmas stories which were posted on Facebook and our YouTube channel, one a day, leading up to Christmas Eve.

## *Adults*

- **Expanded Book Groups:** Our book group offerings continue to expand. In addition to our original day book group, Chapter Chat and Page Turners, which meets the first Wednesday of the month in the evening, we now have the Usual Suspects mystery/crime fiction group meeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the evening. All groups are moderated by the library director, who gets books on interlibrary loan based on top lists and group member suggestions.
- **Hooks and Needles Yarn Craft Group:** The members of this monthly group created a daisy granny square afghan which brought in \$### in our silent auction in October. (It was won by a family member of one of the group members, Debbie Muse, who found out later that it will eventually grace the bed of her first grandchild, who was born in November.)
- **Author Talks:** In 2022 we hosted three local authors who talked about their books and writing process:
  - February: Ken Tingley, former editor of the Post-Star, *The Last American Editor*;
  - June: S.A. Kazlo, *Kibbles and Death*, the first in her Samantha Davies cozy mystery series.
  - July: Lale Davison, English professor at SUNY Adirondack, *Against the Grain*.
- **Local History**—Former Hudson Falls history teacher Cindy Whitman shared her dioramas in our display cases and in May gave a talk entitled “Everyday People in Historic Times.”
- **Food:** In April we hosted “Gardening with Stacy” followed in July by “We Can, You Can” (the latter from the Cornell Cooperative Extension).

## Ongoing Services

- **Puzzle Swap:** We continue to offer a supply of jigsaw puzzles that people can come in and take for as long as they want.
- **Copies/Printing/Faxes:** For those without printers or all-in-one machines, the ability to come to the library for faxes, copies or printing out from our public computer is a big help to many local people, who otherwise would have to go to the Staples in Queensbury or UPS Store in Glens Falls.
- **Used books and other materials:** Rather than hosting several big book sales a year, the library is transitioning to a permanent, self-serve area offering used books and other materials on a self-serve basis. Look for more about The Book Nook in 2023.
- **Tutoring space:** Whether its students from the Hudson Falls Central School District or adults seeking help from volunteers of the Tri-County Literacy Center, the library offers a safe space for tutoring of all sorts.