

PUBLIC LIBRARY



Sounds Like Summer, the library's weekly series of live outdoor concerts on Tuesday evenings in July and August, was back and welcomed by the public in the summer of 2021. (Drone image courtesy of Paulo DeOliveira)

To the Honorable Select Board and the Citizens of Edgartown:

As 2021 opened, library staff were hopeful but uncertain about what the pandemic's second year held in store. When would full library services and in-person programs resume – when and how would the return to “normal” unfold?

As it turned out, 2021 was a year of creative solutions at the Edgartown Library as bits of normal life returned.

In January, while limited curbside hours were offered for pickup of physical materials, Programs Coordinator Virginia Munro continued to present online programs for patrons to enjoy from home, including weekly yoga classes with former Library Assistant Jelisa Difo, a film discussion group moderated by Virginia, an author talk, jazz with Joel Harrison, and cooking class with Library Assistant Chris Look. Children's Librarian Elyce Retmier stayed connected with families at her own customized pickup window in the Children's Room garden area, promoted a winter reading challenge, offered virtual story times and continued to offer daily craft bags for kids to do at home. By early summer, Elyce had handed out more than 5,000 craft bags to our library's youngest patrons.

In February, the library added Chromebook laptops to the list of items patrons could borrow. Online programs included a Valentine's Day concert with pianist and Friend of the Library Adele Dreyer and an author talk with Jean Stone. Chris Look engaged teens by launching weekly Minecraft Meetup sessions, and Elyce Retmier organized the Community Helpers and Heroes Parade

along Roberts Way, featuring vehicles from the Fire and Police Departments, the Highway Department, Island construction companies, and a tractor from a local farm. More than 50 parents and children attended the parade despite the cold, reminding the staff of the library's value as a place of gathering and community.

On Feb. 26, the Island community mourned the loss of longtime Board of Trustees member Herb Foster. Herb exemplified the spirit of giving back to the community through the many Island organizations he belonged to, including his role as a Trustee and liaison member of the Friends of the Library. His support of the library was boundless, and he is deeply missed by staff, Trustees, and Friends. Former reference librarian Nis Kildegaard was elected to the Board of Trustees in May as a write-in candidate, as Herb had already submitted his papers in January for re-election to what would have been his sixth term as Library Trustee.

Spring brought milder weather and opportunities to expand the library's services to patrons. Curbside hours were extended by an hour to 5 p.m. daily. Adult virtual programming included a presentation by Eunice Youmans on food waste composting, an evening of jazz with Jeremy Berlin, and a redux of the Living Room Readings with local poets Fan Ogilvie and Arnie Reisman. The Children's Room partnered with Sheriff's Meadow Foundation to develop a new Story Walk every month, a self-guided activity for children and their caregivers to walk the trail at the Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary while following along with a well-loved

children's book. Inside the Children's Room, Island artist Margot Datz installed eight new panels of marine animals to complement the existing mural depicting ocean life that she completed in 2018. The Children's Room garden area also received an upgrade when a double-gate opening was installed in the fence, improving access to both the garden and Children's Room pick-up window.

In May, virtual programming focused on local and global environmental sustainability. Programs included an in-depth look at the revival of the osprey with ornithologist Alan Poole, and a book talk with environmental activist and author Laurie David.

In June, Edgartown joined libraries across the Island in opening its doors to patrons after more than a year of building closures. The day came with invigorated excitement as many patrons expressed joy at being able to once again be inside the library to browse, use a computer, and say hello to staff members. The library offered hybrid services in June for patrons who wished to continue using curbside service. The Children's Room also welcomed visitors on a timed scheduling system, and Library Assistant Kerith McFadden offered a weekly outdoor craft session in the Children's Room garden area.

After fifteen years, the library's website underwent a complete makeover, thanks to a donation from the Edgartown Library Foundation. The new and improved site, launched in June, features functionality that is both user-friendly and easy to navigate. For the first time, patrons are able to access an online calendar displaying all library events and can sign up for their favorite programs.

July and August saw another milestone with the resumption of the library's Sounds Like Summer music series, an event halted by COVID in 2020 after eleven consecutive years of live music on the library's lawn. Patrons hungry for live music were once again able to enjoy the best of the Island's musicians on warm summer evenings.

Island Grown Initiative's Mobile Market used the library parking lot through July and August to sell locally grown fresh produce and eggs every Monday evening. Throughout the summer months the library also continued its slate of monthly programs including book discussions, technology workshops, yoga, cooking demonstrations, ornithology lectures, a presentation on car maintenance, film discussion groups, an in-person author talk with local author Thomas Dresser, and a tick-borne disease informational session. In the Children's Room, Elyce Retmier invited Tony the Pony to visit the front lawn so children could pet Tony and learn about horses, and local kids' rock band The Pinkletinks played three

consecutive monthly concerts of classic children's songs.

A record number of young participants signed up for the children's Summer Reading program, whose theme this year was 'Tails and Tales'. A total of 278 kids read thousands of books, and prizes for their achievements were donated by local businesses including Edgartown Meat & Fish, Dairy Queen, Edgartown Pizza, and Rosewater Market & Takeaway.

September's new school year began fully in-person, and the Children's Room prepared to resume its role as a destination for kids after school. The appointment system required to enter the Children's Room was lifted, and furniture was rearranged for safer seating configurations.



The return of patrons for visits to the library in June was a high point of 2021 for the staff and for the community it serves.

Board games, coloring pages, puzzles, and other indoor activities were reintroduced, and the sight of school-aged kids coming back to the library after school to socialize, read, and do homework was a welcomed one. The library's hours were extended by an hour to 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and adult programming included an in-person bird walk with bird expert Robert Culbert, online yoga, author talks, and a presentation on ways to de-clutter your kitchen with organizing humorist and author Jamie Novak.

As the weather cooled, online programming once again took a front seat. October and November delivered a variety of adult programming including cooking classes, a poetry workshop, a presentation on dementia with Mary Holmes, yoga, a film discussion group, a presentation on the history and impact of the horror movie, an appraisal talk with author and auctioneer Mike Ivankovich, and a concert by Celtic duo Stanley and Grimm. The Children's Room offered weekly outdoor Fit Camp, a youth fitness program with local trainer Bonnie Kingsbury, as well as after-school crafting. In November, Children's Librarian Elyce Retmier began an in-person movement-based story time for preschool children, held in the Program Room to



Santa Claus visited with young patrons outside the library in December.

allow little's the space to Wiggle With the Words.

In December, the library caught a glimpse of its old self when the Friends of the Library hosted their annual Open House and fundraiser, held during the weekend of Christmas in Edgartown. Masked patrons of all ages visited the library and were able to enjoy a hot drink while purchasing a fresh poinsettia plant and browsing several raffle items, or making a holiday card in the Children's Room. The day was a simple reminder of better times to come. Santa paid the Children's Room garden area a visit on a mild Saturday in December, taking copious mental notes as Island children stopped by to convey their wish lists for the holidays.

The Friends of the Library continued to support the library in countless ways. In January, the Herb & Anita Foster Staff Education Fund was established to support professional development for library staff. In March, the Friends partnered with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to provide free, age-appropriate books to registered Edgartown children from birth until age five. And thanks to a successful annual drive campaign, the Friends funded more than one hundred library programs for adults and children this year. We are grateful for the tremendous support they provide for the library and our community.

For the second year in a row, the Edgartown Library received a three-star rating in a national ranking of *Library Journal's* annual review of public libraries. *Library Journal* reviews public library data and ranks the best performing libraries in their budget categories. This year, 5,846 U.S. libraries were rated nationwide and just 261 qualified as star libraries, including 14 in Massachusetts.

Edgartown Free Public Library Board of Trustees

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Trustees meet on the third Thursday of each month.

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LIBRARY STAFF

LISA HORTON SHERMAN, Director
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ELYCE RETMIER, Children's Librarian
THOMAS IGNACIO, Circulation Supervisor
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CHRISTOPHER LOOK IV, Library Assistant
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ROSA PARKER, Library Assistant
BARBARA KEANE, Library Assistant

www.edgartownlibrary.org

Facts at a Glance

fiscal year ending 6/30/2021

Collection size.....	91,945
Books	35,609
Subscriptions.....	54
Audio CDs	2,201
Video	7,993
Downloadable audio	10,531
Downloadable books.....	30,631
Circulation.....	73,823
Edgartown residents holding library cards	2,103
Edgartown library cards total	5,159
Volunteers	1
Volunteer hours	60
Total number of library programs, live and virtual	458
Total attendance at programs.....	15,786
Total annual foot traffic.....	36,719

