

Library Director's Report (October 2023)

Meeting Date: November 14, 2023

Prepared by Lori Stokem, Director

Monthly Statistics: Statistical summaries for the month of October 2023 will be available at our meeting.

Financial/Donations:

News/Issues:

- During the month of October the library offered an incredible travelling exhibit called "Messages From Survivors." It's a powerful new exhibit about the Holocaust, survival and resiliency. Students from the AP World History, AP US History and English IV classes at Salem Central School and members of the Salem Rotary Club (I attended the Rotary meeting along with our guest speaker) came to the library to experience the exhibit and to listen to the child of a Holocaust survivor, Harry Engel. Harry shared his father's story of survival during his time in Auschwitz-Birkenau, a Nazi concentration camp. The library also offered an evening program with guest speaker, Suzanne Cohen. Suzanne shared her family's experiences during the Holocaust. She is a local author who has written a book about her family. Suzanne was also the guest speaker at our monthly Senior Citizen Potluck Lunch in October. While here visitors were able to view six exhibit panels that tell personal stories of Holocaust survivors, use QR codes to listen to videos of the survivors, and take-home cards that can be kept and read at home. We were able to borrow this exhibit thanks to SALS and a grant from Carrie Woerner. The exhibit was viewed by 200+ people while it was here at the library. I just attended a Zoom meeting with SALS and the creators of the Memory Project to discuss the project---what went well, suggestions for improvement, and any advise/ideas for other libraries that will have the exhibit in the future.

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- I have been participating in virtual Director's Council meetings.
- The library once again participated in "The Great Giveback" this fall. This is when libraries across New York State participate in some kind of project that benefits their community. The library partnered with Books In Kids' Hands and the Historic Salem Courthouse to give away free children's books and crafts to kids at the annual Trunk or Treat event. Together we gave away more than 200 gently used books and almost 100 take home crafts. It was great to see kids get excited about getting free books along with their treats!
- Many people have come in to the library to purchase a copy of Tales and Legends From Salem.
- On Halloween we had over 200 trick or treaters come in to the library! (Some came for treats, some came to get warm, and some came in to use the bathrooms). We had several games set up in the children's section so little ones could have some fun! This was an excellent way to get new people in to the library! What a fun night!
- The library participated in Salem Central School's Kindergarten Parade on Halloween. Kids, dressed in their costumes, stopped at the library for a treat!
- Our new "Open" signs are up. Thanks to Kim and Karen for getting them ordered, Ed and Mark for putting them up, and the Friends of Bancroft Library for paying for them. They look great and we've received many compliments about them.
- Farm-2-Library Program Update: Last month we had at least 86 community members take a food item from our pantry (Most likely more as people come and go that we don't always see). The Comfort Food Community continues to provide our patrons with free, healthy food each week.

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- Karen continues to add some wonderful new books, games, and DVDs to our shelves that are available for our patrons.
- We continue to keep our patrons informed of new books and library news through the use of the library's Facebook page, our webpage, newspaper articles, and our newsletter. A fall newsletter went out last month.

Looking Ahead:

- In November the library will be hosting a program on Alzheimer's and Dementia with the Warren, Washington & Hamilton County Alzheimer's Association of Northeastern New York. The name of the program is "Understanding Alzheimer's & Dementia." The program was held on Thursday, November 2nd.
- As you know, the Friends of Bancroft Library are busy selling wreaths and kissing balls for their annual library fundraiser. Many thanks to the Friends group for all of their hard work on behalf of the library!

Programs:

- Our monthly Senior Citizen Potluck Lunch was on Wednesday, October 25th. A delicious lunch was followed by a program led by Suzanne Cohen, a local author who has written a book about her family's experiences during the Holocaust. The group was given the take home cards from the "Messages From Survivors" exhibit and encouraged to take a look at the panels in the hallway. As our next lunch would be the day before Thanksgiving, it was decided to have our November lunch the last Wednesday of the month instead.

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- In September and October Washington County Public Health, in collaboration with the Office of the Aging and Disability Resource Center, offered a Tai Chi class for Arthritis & Falls Prevention at the library. The class is just finishing up this week. There was a high amount of interest in the class and we're hoping they will come back again in the future and offer it again.
- All of our regular programs continued throughout the month of October, Bancroft Book Buddies, Scrabble Club, Chess Club, Mahjong, Book Club, Writing Club, Kickin' Knitters, Tech Help with Noah and Tri-County Literacy (We are now up to four tutors and students).
- We continue to make available weekly "Take Away" craft bags for the children in our community.