

LIBRARY LIFE



Notes & Events

- Thurs., Feb. 8, 10 am-12pm, Job Service
- 5:30 pm Library Board
- Mon., Feb. 19, Library closed in observance of Presidents' Day
- Wed., Feb. 21 @ 2 pm Field to Fork Webinar Watch Party. (Edible Flowers)
- Thurs., Feb. 22, 10:30 am — Movie showing of *Gnomeo & Juliet*
- Wed., Feb. 28, @ 2 pm Field to Fork Webinar Watch Party (Gardening w/ Arthritis & Pain)

Thank you

"Thank you all for doing a great job on the 120 year celebration and open house for Di's Den. VC & BC should certainly be proud of our local library and its missions. Continue your fine work!"

-Sincerely, Noreen S.



Do you remember when the dome was open?

Light Up the Library!

Watch for more details to come about our roofing and restoration project for the library. Of course, you can donate to this project any time you wish!

Questions?

Contact Library Board Pres. Hilde van Gijssel (240-462-8785),

Library Foundation Pres. Joseph DeMasi (josephdemasi54@yahoo.com, or

Library Director Anita Tulp (845-3821)

From the Director's Desk

First Year Reflections

January 1, 2024, marked my first anniversary as Director for the VCBC Public Library! I have spent the month of January reflecting on all that took place during the year, all that was accomplished, and most of all, all that I learned!

I began my tenure as director as the final steps of a book challenge were taking place. It was great to know that the policies and procedures in place for such an event worked and allowed community members on both sides of the issue to have a voice and to be treated fairly. The process made it very obvious that having policies and procedures for a multitude of possible situations is very important. In fact, we just finalized a Disaster Plan for the library which outlines how the library responds to any major event that happens in the building. We also approved policies that govern the use of the Mary E. Fisher room (aka "Multi-purpose Room") and our display areas. All policies are available to the public and can be found on our website under governance or at the circulation desk.

During the year, the remodeling of the middle room by the Children's Library into what is now Di's Den came to fruition. What a wonderful space! Patrons and visitors of all ages have enjoyed spending time there crafting, playing, or just visiting. The Harry Potter Reading Nook was also finished and is a wonderful small area for a young reader to spend time browsing books or reading. The grand opening of these areas took place during our celebration of 120 years of serving our community as a library on Oct. 5, 2023. We started to put plans in motion to replace the library roof and restore the rotunda to its original glory. This is an exciting project and will be a huge undertaking! The result will be awesome for our community and visitors as well as important to the preservation of our historic library. Fundraising efforts have already begun so if you are interested in donating towards this project, please contact me here at the library. I will refer you to the right people to accept your gift.

I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many people in our community this past year! Their love for this library and for reading is very inspiring! As I look through out stats for the last year, I am amazed at how many books, DVDs, audio books, games, puzzles, and many other items have been checked out. For the year of 2023, 23,723 physical items were checked out of the library. For those that read on an electronic device and use their library card to access their reading material, there were 14,364 electronic checkouts for 2023, for a combined total of 38,087 checkouts during 2023! The Libby App has made it possible for patrons to access many more reading resources digitally than we could possibly house physically. It also saves our patrons time since they can look for items from anywhere they have online access at any time they wish. This is a service that is growing in popularity and demand. So, in comparison, for the month of January of 2024, there were 1681 electronic checkouts compared to 1075 electronic checkouts in January of 2023. In fact, electronic checkouts increased significantly when COVID began. From December of 2019 through December of 2023, electronic checkouts increased by 47%.

Another interesting fact about our library is that it saves our community members a ton of money! If you have a library card and use it, you may have noticed on your receipt a notation telling you how much you saved by checking those items out of the library rather than purchasing yourself. It may not seem like much to the individual person at the time, yet when you total those savings up for our entire community, the amount is very enlightening. For 2023, that amount totaled \$477,785! What does that tell you? Well, it tells me that we have a lot of people in our community that love to read and use the library for their resources. It also tells me that our community members that are saving money by utilizing the library have more resources to spend in other ways in our community. In other words, using the library is a win for both patrons and our community businesses, charities, and other economic entities.

As I begin the year 2024, I am looking forward to learning more about our community, its people, and how I can serve them better. I have always loved libraries and this one is certainly special to me. The library is a place where I have always felt welcome, and I want to make sure that everyone in our community has that same feeling when they enter the doors of our library. It has served our community well for 120 years and will continue to do so for many more. I invite anyone with questions to come for a tour, a visit, and to sign up for a library card if you don't have one. You will not regret it!

Anita Tulp, VCBC Public Library Director ~ librarydirector@vcbclibrary.org