

Harwinton Public Library
2023/2024 Librarian's Report

Mission Statement

The mission of the Harwinton Public Library shall be to provide for the informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the citizens of Harwinton through the provision of an organized collection of print, multimedia, and electronic resources. This mission shall be met by the maintenance of a trained professional staff and support personnel.

Special emphasis is placed on encouraging children to develop an interest in reading and learning by offering appropriate materials and programs and collaborating with the Region 10 school district educational programs. In addition, the Library shall work to provide people of all ages with high-demand, high-interest resources available in a variety of formats. In summary, the Library shall actively encourage the use of its materials, seek to keep residents informed of resources available, and foster the intellectual growth, character, and cohesiveness of the community.

Hours

Monday & Wednesday: 12:30 AM– 8:30 PM

Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday: 9:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Saturday: 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM (winter), 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM (summer)

Personnel

The paid professional and support staff of the Harwinton Public Library is here to provide excellent service and help our patrons take advantage of everything the library has to offer.

Library Director – Alice Freiler, M.L.S.

Adult Services Librarian – Lydia Smith, M.L.S.

Youth Services Librarian – Molly Pfaender, M.L.S.

Library Clerk – Lee Morris

Library Page – Addyson Messier

As a small library, we rely on the dedication of our volunteers; we could not do without them. Thank you to the many volunteers who work in the Library and behind the scenes to support the Library and its mission. A special shout-out goes to Town Historian Susan McClen for helping our patrons trace their ancestry and research local history, the Harwinton Garden Club for keeping our flower beds so lovely, and to the volunteers from the AARP for their help at tax time!

Library Board

The Harwinton Public Library Board of Directors is the governing body of the library. Composed of nine publicly-elected members, the Board determines policy and is actively involved in all phases of library operations

Leslie Flowers, Co-Chair

Arthur Potwin, Co-Chair

Debbie Janssens, Treasurer
Jamie O'Meara Cartwright
Paul Edwards
Rebecca Grieco
V. Everett Lyons Jr.
Naomi Toffness
James Zasso

Circulation

The annual circulation is the total circulation of all library materials, both physical and electronic. A circulation transaction is the act of lending or renewing an item from the library's collection for use outside the library. Circulation of physical audiovisual materials such as Books on CD and DVDs continues to decline in our Library, while circulation of downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, and streaming videos rises. In 2023/2024 the Library circulated 50,190 items. Some circulation highlights include:

Adult Books: 13,561
Children's Books: 18,908
Young Adult Books: 1,548
DVDs: 2,626
eBooks: 3,439
eAudiobooks: 4,806
Toys, Games, & Puzzles: 537

Patrons

Patron visits are counted using electronic door counters at the front and side entrance. People who attend events held by outside groups in our meeting room are not counted as patrons. The past year saw robust attendance at the Library, exceeding pre-pandemic numbers for the first time since we had to close our building due to Covid. 23,422 patrons visited the Library between July 2023 and June 2024.

Programs and Attendance

As part of our mission to meet the cultural and recreational needs of our patrons, the library offers a full calendar of programs for all ages. There is no money for programs in the Library's operating budget. Most Library programs are paid for with funds raised by the Harwinton Library Friends, supplemented by grants, Annual Appeal contributions, and donations from local groups. We are grateful to those who donated their time, money, and expertise to support our programming. This year the Library held 290 programs attended by 4,835 people. Our most popular program by far was our Harwinton Grows Seed Library; 323 people borrowed seeds over the course of the year! Our most popular single event was our Summer Reading 2024 Kickoff on June 26, at which we welcomed more than 150 people of all ages!

Meeting Room Use

The Library provides 2 meeting spaces for public use by our patrons and local organizations. Our Conference Room seats 12 and is available during Library hours. Our Activity Room seats 49 and can be used both during and outside of Library hours. This year our Conference Room was used 172 times and our Activity Room was used 173 times. 21 requests were denied because the rooms were already in use.

Grants, Donations & Fundraising

The Library staff, Library Board, and Harwinton Library Friends work hard each year to raise funds for programs, materials and services that are beyond the scope of our operating budget.

This year the Library received a \$1,000 grant from the Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation to sponsor digital borrowing on Hoopla. We received a \$400 grant from Civic Family Services for new toys, games and Sprout Backpacks for the children's collection. We received \$2,776 in grants from the Connecticut State Library which was used to renew our Ancestry.com for Libraries subscription and to sponsor Hoopla use.

The Library took in \$7,057 in general and memorial donations. Thank you to those who donated in memory of Thomas O'Meara, Marion Painter, James Sawyer, Richard Silvernale, John Bolinski, Victor Muschell, Andrew Grech, Theodore Brouillard, Loda Sheehan and Bud Motuzick. Donations were used for programs, new toys, Seed Library supplies, and 65 new books.

The 2023 Annual Appeal raised over \$16,500. Money from the Annual Fund was used to purchase new chairs for our Activity Room and more than 150 new books for the collection. The Annual Fund also sponsored our subscriptions to Scholastic Teachables as well as the purchase and borrowing of over 1,500 downloadable titles on OverDrive and Hoopla. The Harwinton Library Friends held their Annual Plant, Book & Bake Sale and Holiday Open House & Craft Sale, as well as monthly Book Sales throughout the summer to raise money for the Library. Their generous support sponsored the 2023 Summer Reading Program, Tumblebooks eBooks for children, our Wifi hotspots, free and discounted passes to area museums and attractions, subscriptions to BookPage and several of our most popular circulating magazines, and countless programs throughout the year. Where would we be without our Friends?

We appreciate your support and welcome your feedback and suggestions. The library is here to serve every member of our community. Let us hear from you so that we can provide the materials and programs that meet your needs.