

The David and Joyce Milne Public Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2025





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Milne in 2026



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MILNE'S MISSION

The David & Joyce Milne Public Library provides a wide range of information and materials, through traditional and innovative methods, to promote, encourage and support the diverse needs within the community. The Library also provides a friendly community space, which encourages curiosity, free inquiry and lifelong learning.

The Library Staff and Trustees are dedicated to providing quality service including new formats and technologies to meet the needs of all ages of our library users.



This library is so wonderful. It's so beautiful! I'm from out of Town and I'll be here for several months, and this is such a nice, grounding place to be. - Library Patron

DIRECTOR'S Welcome

As we look back on 2025, it's clear that this year was one of meaningful progress and innovation for our library. We have built on the services our community depends on, expanded programs that bring people together in impactful ways, and launched new initiatives and services that help us grow into the library our community needs and deserves.

I want to begin by sincerely thanking our Board of Trustees for their guidance and support throughout the year. Their thoughtful leadership helps us stay mission-driven while still embracing opportunities for growth. We are also profoundly grateful to the Friends of the Library. Their generosity is the backbone of so much of what we do. Because of the Friends, we are able to sustain our programming, respond to community needs, and take on new projects and services that simply would not be possible without their unwavering support. Their dedication allows us to dream bigger and deliver more, and we are truly fortunate to have them as partners.

We are also grateful to the many volunteers who lend their time and energy to the library. From supporting day-to-day operations and assisting with programs and events, their contributions make a real difference in the lives of our patrons and in the vitality of our library.

And to our community: thank you for showing up for your library! Whether attending programs, checking out materials, volunteering, sharing ideas, or simply stopping in to enjoy the space, your engagement gives this library its energy. We see every day how deeply this community values learning, creativity, and connection, and we are honored to be a place where all of that can happen.

Most of all though, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the staff. The staff is the heartbeat of the library, and everything we've accomplished this past year is because of their dedication, flexibility, and belief in our mission. This year, several staff members assumed formal leadership roles – guiding committees, fostering partnerships with local organizations, and spearheading new services and initiatives – while every member of our team contributed to the library's success in meaningful ways. Together, the staff has sustained existing programs, supported innovation, and ensured high-quality service for our patrons. Their dedication to our community, to one another, and to the library's mission is both inspiring and deeply appreciated.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to share that several grants we've received will allow us to launch exciting new services and programs in the coming year. These include the creation of a sensory space and sensory items for our patrons, a Cultural Showcase celebrating the diversity of our community, a Career and Job Fair, a hands-on initiative focused on the science of birds and migration, and more. Behind the scenes, we are also hard at work bringing a MakerSpace to fruition here at the Milne, which will provide even more opportunities for learning, creativity, and community engagement.

Thank you all – Board, Friends of the Library, volunteers, community members, and staff – for making 2025 a year of meaningful progress. I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved together and look forward to everything we will continue to build in the year ahead.

Yours in Reading,

Angela Zimmermann
Library Director



MILNE STAFF

Angela Zimmermann
Library Director

Kirsten Rose
Assistant Library Director

Jenna English
Circulation Manager

Brianna Christie
Communication & Outreach Coordinator

Debbie Baker
Children's Librarian

Oliver Bingemann
Library Service Specialist

Rocío Carrera
Teen Librarian

Alex Charron
Buildings and Grounds Attendant

Katie Gentry
Library Service Specialist

Denny Meneghelli
Substitute Library Service Specialist

Debbie Monahan
Library Service Specialist

Patt Patterson
Library Service Specialist

Quin Repetto
Library Service Specialist

Ella Smith
Library Service Specialist

Sam White
Library Service Specialist

Kira Williams
Adult Services Librarian & Volunteer Coordinator

Olivia Zoito
Library Service Specialist



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Listed left to right starting from the top row.

3.



Micah Manary

Board Chair & J-IDEA Committee Member

Ben Lee-Cohen

Board Vice Chair & Building and Grounds Committee Member

Anna Halpin-Healy

Board Treasurer

Robin Lenz

Building & Grounds Committee Member

Katherine Myers

Board Secretary

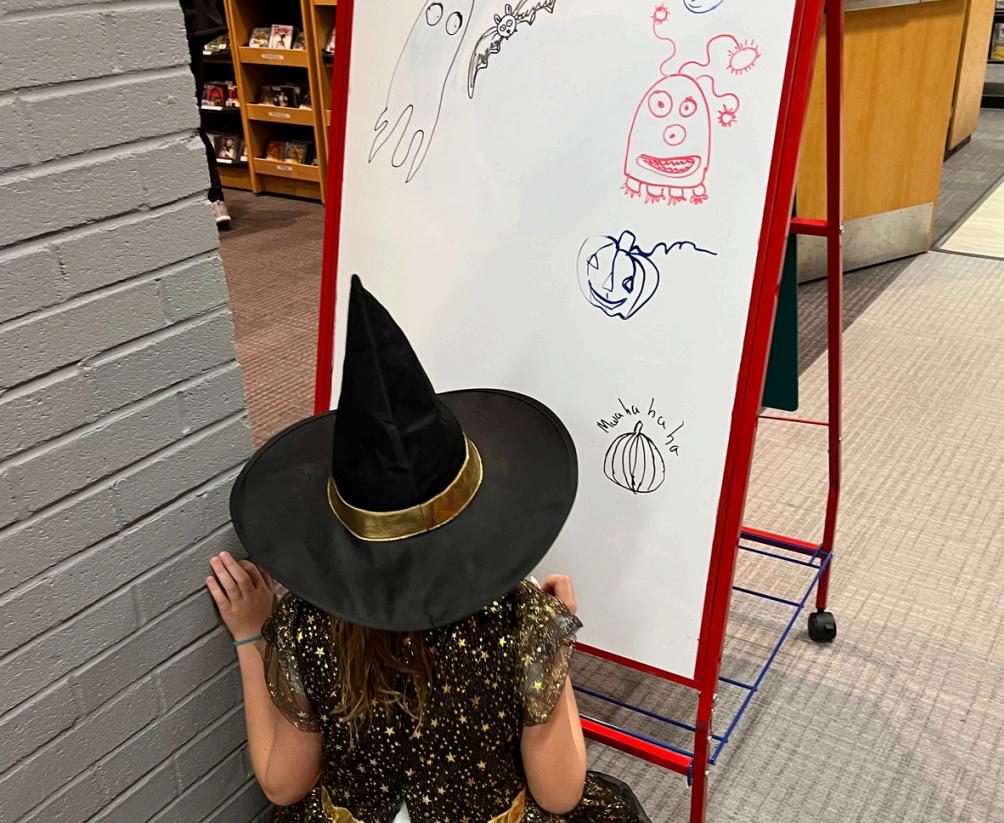
Bridget Spann

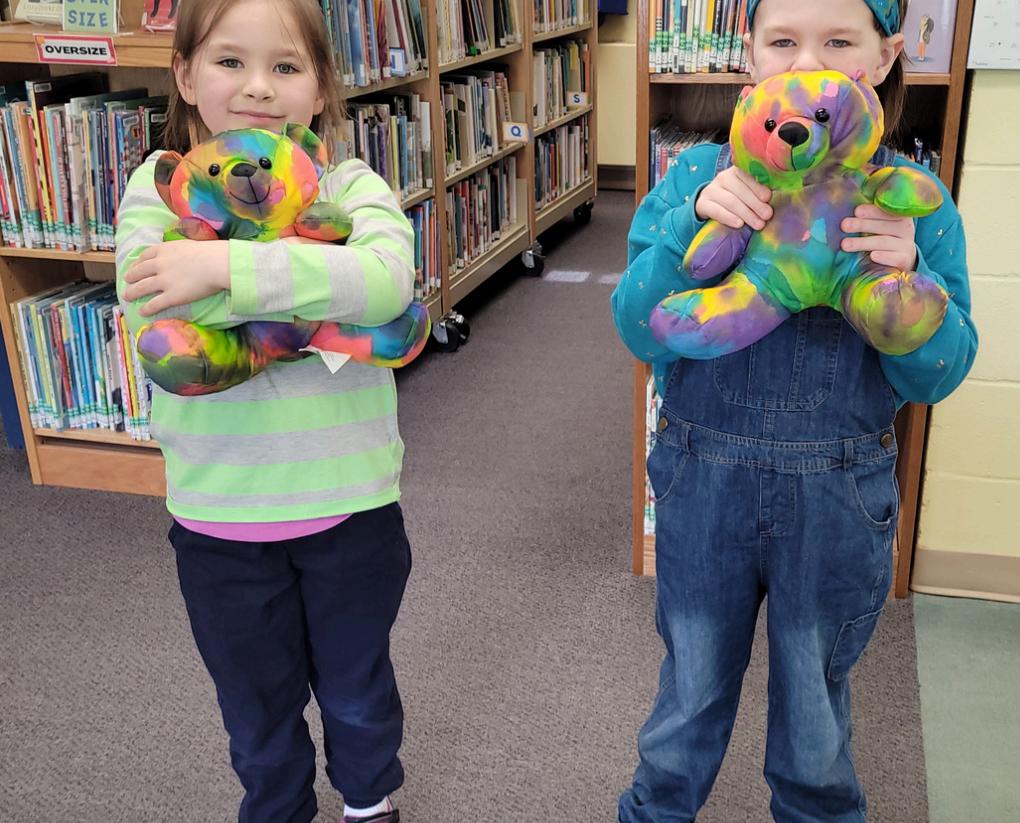
Board Member

Katy Evans

J-IDEA Committee Board Liaison

Not pictured: Micah Manary





2025 by the numbers

Items Checked Out	96,877
Door Counts	156,799
New Library Cards	480
New Items	5,312
Programs Offered	703
Program Attendees	8,207





Fulfilled Holds

17,264

eBooks, Audiobooks,
and Streaming

34,594

Usage of Library
Computers

1,057 hrs & 34 min

1,939 Reservations

Usage of Tech Times

142

Usage of Meeting
Rooms

1,506

866 in 2024

2025 Summer
Reading Participants

182 kids | 82 teens

1,112 raffle tickets

836 raffle tickets

NEW

FRIENDS OF The Milne Public Library

This past year was, in so many ways, a year of transitions for the Friends. At the same time that the board leadership was changing, we also needed to identify new management for Chapter Two Books and the Distribution Center. And yet, we've come through better than ever. The store looks beautiful; inventory is always fresh and plentiful; and there is an abundance of creative ideas for how to sell books and raise our profile in the community. Behind the scenes, the Distribution Center fully revised the book triage process and managed a strategic reduction of inventory in preparation for ceding space to the library as we move ahead with plans for a makerspace. The board is active and engaged, working on projects, taking on new responsibilities, and keeping our organization vital.

There is so much evidence that the Friends of the Milne Library are thriving! To honor Ginny Sheldon's many, many years of unwavering attention to the mission of the Friends, we established the Ginny Fund, which will offer a one-time grant cycle to local organizations for programs and services that benefit the community and support the goals of the Library in the areas of literacy, civic mindedness, and mental health.

In addition to our huge success in selling books, we are finding other ways to be present and help out in the community. The Friends have shown up at: National Night Out, the Williamstown Newcomers gathering, and the Sustainability Fair, and hosted a craft table at the Holiday Walk Penny Social. We even appeared in an article featuring Williamstown in the London Financial Times.

None of this is possible without the dedication of the more than 80 volunteers who generously give their time to keep our enterprises humming. We can't sell a single book without the great attitudes, consistency, and talents of every single volunteer.

And, the great news is that despite all the change, including shifting the oversight of finances from a long-standing board member to our treasurer, our financial position is as strong as ever. This year, the Friends were able to give \$102,748 to the library, with a small amount also going to Words Are Wonderful, a literary program sponsored by the Williamstown Elementary School.

Looking ahead, more change is on the way. As several long-term board members step down, we are grateful for their service and excited to welcome their replacements, who offer an infusion of energy, experience, and insight. A major undertaking is the creation of the MakerSpace, which will inevitably create challenges to our work flow at the DC. I can confidently say that we are prepared. We are identifying successors for key roles; continuing to document job descriptions and operational procedures to ease future role transitions; and are excited about collaborating with Angie and the Trustees to ensure the success of the makerspace.

Elizabeth Whitney

President of the Friends of the
David and Joyce Milne Public Library



THINGDOM

Our Growing Library of Things

Arts & Crafts

37

Experience Passes

15

Health & Wellness

36

Miscellaneous

42

Outdoor Recreation

102

Technology

53

Tools

46

Board Games & Toys

63

Gardening

32

Kitchenware

82

Music

5

STEAM Kits

34

547

Total Items



What made 2025 an eventful year for you at the library?

Murder Mystery event, yoga classes, exercise classes, [and] Thingdom Things!! Especially the Wi-Fi hotspots and laminator.
- Library Patron

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As the 2025 year comes to an end, the work of our Justice, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (J-IDEA) committee has only just begun. The committee thanks library staff, patrons, and community members for their unwavering support in our commitment to creating a library with a culture of belonging and striving to become a catalyst of social justice within our community.

This year, our committee launched initiatives that have been fruitful to the community we serve. Our Community Cupboard was launched in July to address food insecurity that was present in our library patrons. As we end the year, over 1,500 food items were accessible to patrons experiencing food insecurity. In December, we distributed an updated Community Resource Guide that included more Northern Berkshire resources like parks, laundry services, housing, and more. We hope this guide will reduce some barriers that some might be facing. Additionally, we are grateful to have worked and maintained relationships with community partners like Andi Bryant of Remedy Hall, Ursula Bare of the Menstrual Justice Initiative, and Bekki Dawson of Purple Harbor. We have been able to maintain our Remedy Hall satellite locations in the front vestibule and Teen Room, including the Menstrual Justice Initiative's free, reusable hygiene products for patrons, and Purple Harbor's care kits.

In addition to physical initiatives this year, we worked with the library's Board of Trustees to reshape the library's DEI policy to a commitment statement and launched our very own landing page on the website.

As we look forward to the new year, the J-IDEA Committee is excited to not only maintain our 2025 initiatives, but launch new ones! February's Black History Month programming will focus on the rich Black history that is right here in Berkshire County and Black Joy. We will be hosting a Cultural Showcase in May in thanks to Mass. Cultural Council's grant we were awarded. We hope to amplify Black and Brown professionals in Berkshire County through programming and initiatives and we can't wait for you all to join us in this work!

Thank you to committee members for facilitating and cultivating this important work!

With Gratitude,
Brianna Christie, J-IDEA Committee Chair

Committee Members include:

Debbie Baker, Children's Librarian

Katy Evans, Board Liaison / Board of Trustees Member

Val Freitas, Community Empowerment Intern

Micah Manary, Board of Trustees Chair

Sam White, Library Services Specialist

Elizabeth Whitney, Friends of the Library President

Angela Zimmermann, Library Director

When asked to sum up the library:

Marvelous! To say a bit more, I'm on food stamps. I've been feeling down and thought what could I do to lift myself up? I've been coming here for 20 years - and, along with the Clark, the library has become a true oasis in Williamstown. Books and art! What is better? - Library Patron



Sustainability

Sustainability was adopted as the fifth core value of the American Library Association in 2019 in response to worldwide concern about sustainability. Libraries are well-situated to address the "Triple Bottom Line" of sustainability: economic feasibility, environmental stewardship, and social justice. To this end, the Milne Public Library organized a committee to address sustainability at the library and in Williamstown.

To begin, we focused on environmental sustainability through energy conservation, programming and more environmentally responsible purchasing practices, with an eye towards encompassing all three forms of sustainability in 2026 and beyond. Our first initiative was the creation of a seed library. Between April and September, we provided 1572 mini-packets of seeds free of charge to library patrons. Nearly half of the seeds were donated by the Common Seed Project, Seed Savers Exchange, High Mowing Farm and Fedco, and the rest we were able to purchase with support from Friends of the Milne Public Library. We did not collect seeds from patrons' gardens to put back into the seed library this year, but plan on doing so in 2026!

While Climate Preparedness Week has been acknowledged at the library in past years, this year we held our first "Community Eco-Fair." This event was organized over a period of a few months to celebrate the many Berkshire groups working towards sustainability, and in recognition of National Preparedness Month. In addition, the Town of Williamstown's COOL Committee tabled for the "Energize Williamstown" program, and library staff highlighted the sustainable initiatives taken by the library as well. We are deeply grateful to the twenty-four organizations that participated, the local businesses who donated to help make it a success, Friends of the Milne Public Library and the many people who attended the fair.

Other sustainability projects included a compost program in partnership with Second Chance Composting and a Sustainable & Resilient New England Libraries grant to purchase Terracycle boxes. Thirty-six community members, in addition to library staff, deliver compostable waste to bins situated at the front of the library. As of November 1, this program has composted 5,347 tons of waste and as a result has kept 29,723 tons of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere! The Terracycle boxes, which we expect to make available in early 2026, will enable library patrons to recycle materials that cannot otherwise be recycled in our waste management district.

We also hosted the first sustainability book group, "Sustainabili-Reads," in November. We read and discussed *The Milkweed Lands* by Eric Lee-Mäder. The next meeting takes place on February 10th, 2026 when we will discuss *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas Tallamy, and will include a brief visit from the author! Finally, our most recent sustainability-related program was a gift-wrapping party. We solicited donated, new or gently-used wrapping materials from the community and set up wrapping stations for anyone to wrap their gifts while enjoying music and hot cider.

Looking ahead, in July the library was awarded a small grant and related materials by the "Flight Path" program to raise awareness about bird migration and conservation. These materials, from books to binoculars, and several locally-based programs will be offered in the first half of 2026!

For more information and updates about the Sustainability Committee and our efforts at the library, please visit our webpage: www.milnelibrary.org/sustainability. Many thanks to our dedicated committee members and everyone who supported us this year!

Kira Williams, Sustainability Committee Chair

Committee Members include:

Ursula Bare, Community Member

Rocío Carrera, Teen Librarian

Brianna Christie, Communication and Outreach Coordinator

Val Freitas, Community Empowerment Intern

Robin Lenz, Board of Trustees Member

David McGowan, Community Member

Angela Zimmermann, Library Director







2025 AWARDED GRANTS

\$10,000

Libraries Transforming Communities

Awarded by the American Library Association's Accessible Small and Rural Communities. This grant will be used to create sensory-friendly resources within the library, including a dedicated sensory space and/or sensory kits. These resources will help foster a calm, inclusive environment where patrons can comfortably engage with library services; supporting accessibility, well-being, and a sense of belonging for all members of the community.

\$12,000

Sustainable & Resilient New England Libraries

Awarded by the Association for Rural and Small Libraries. This grant will fund a comprehensive recycling initiative at the David & Joyce Milne Public Library, providing TerraCycle Zero Waste Boxes for hard-to-recycle materials and supporting educational programs to engage the community in sustainability and waste reduction.

\$5,000

Creative Experiences

Awarded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This grant will be used to fund a Cultural Showcase at the library - a lively celebration bringing culture to life through music, dance, performances, and the participation of local organizations. It's an opportunity for our community to experience and engage with a rich tapestry of creative expression right here at the library. The Cultural Showcase will be held on Saturday, May 30th - stay tuned for more info!

\$1,500

TED Democracy Live

Our library has been selected to host TED Democracy LIVE, a nationwide series of satellite events livestreaming TED Democracy Philadelphia: Founding Futures. By hosting the livestream, our library is bringing these groundbreaking ideas directly to our community, fostering civic engagement, critical thinking, and meaningful dialogue. Supported by The Pew Charitable Trusts and organized in collaboration with Visit Philadelphia and the American Library Association, this grant will be used to support event needs.

\$500

Flight Path Initiative

Awarded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. This grant will allow our library to bring the Flight Path campaign directly to our community, offering free hands-on activities, educational resources, and materials that teach visitors about bird migration, encourage bird-friendly practices, and provide engaging STEM learning opportunities for patrons of all ages.

\$1,000

Mary and Henry Flint Fund

Awarded by the Williamstown Community Chest. The grant is to support the planning and execution of our Job & Career Fair in the Fall of 2026. In the weeks leading up to the fair, we will offer a series of interactive workshops, including resume writing, interview preparation, and other career readiness sessions, designed to equip participants with the skills and confidence they need to succeed. The grant will also help fund the fair itself, providing a valuable opportunity for attendees to connect directly with potential employers and explore a wide range of career paths.

Minimum 30 Devices

Connected & Online Program

Awarded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute. We will be receiving a minimum of 30 devices (laptops, desktops, tablets) as well as assistive technology and supportive equipment. This grant will be used to expand and promote our technology offerings - including new devices, classes, and workshops - with a focus on workforce development, bilingual programs, health literacy, and supporting future makerspace initiatives.



I have been so deeply grateful in 2025 for your computers and printers, and the kind staff who help me when I get stuck. Thank you. - Library Patron

Milne's 2025 **TOP FIVE:**

Explore Passes Circulated

1. Clark Art Institute
2. Mass MoCA
3. Sand Springs
4. Norman Rockwell Museum
5. Bennington Museum

Books Circulated

1. "God of the Woods" - Liz Moore
2. "The Grey Wolf" - Louise Penny
3. "Before the Coffee Gets Cold" - Toshikazu Kawaguchi
4. "North Woods" - Daniel Mason
5. "James" - Percival Everett

Juvenile Books Circulated

1. "Dog Man: Brawl of the Wild" - Dav Pilkey
2. "Fetch-22" - Dav Pilkey
3. "Camp" - Kayla Miller
4. "Sisters" - Raina Telgemeier
5. "Grime and Punishment" - Dav Pilkey

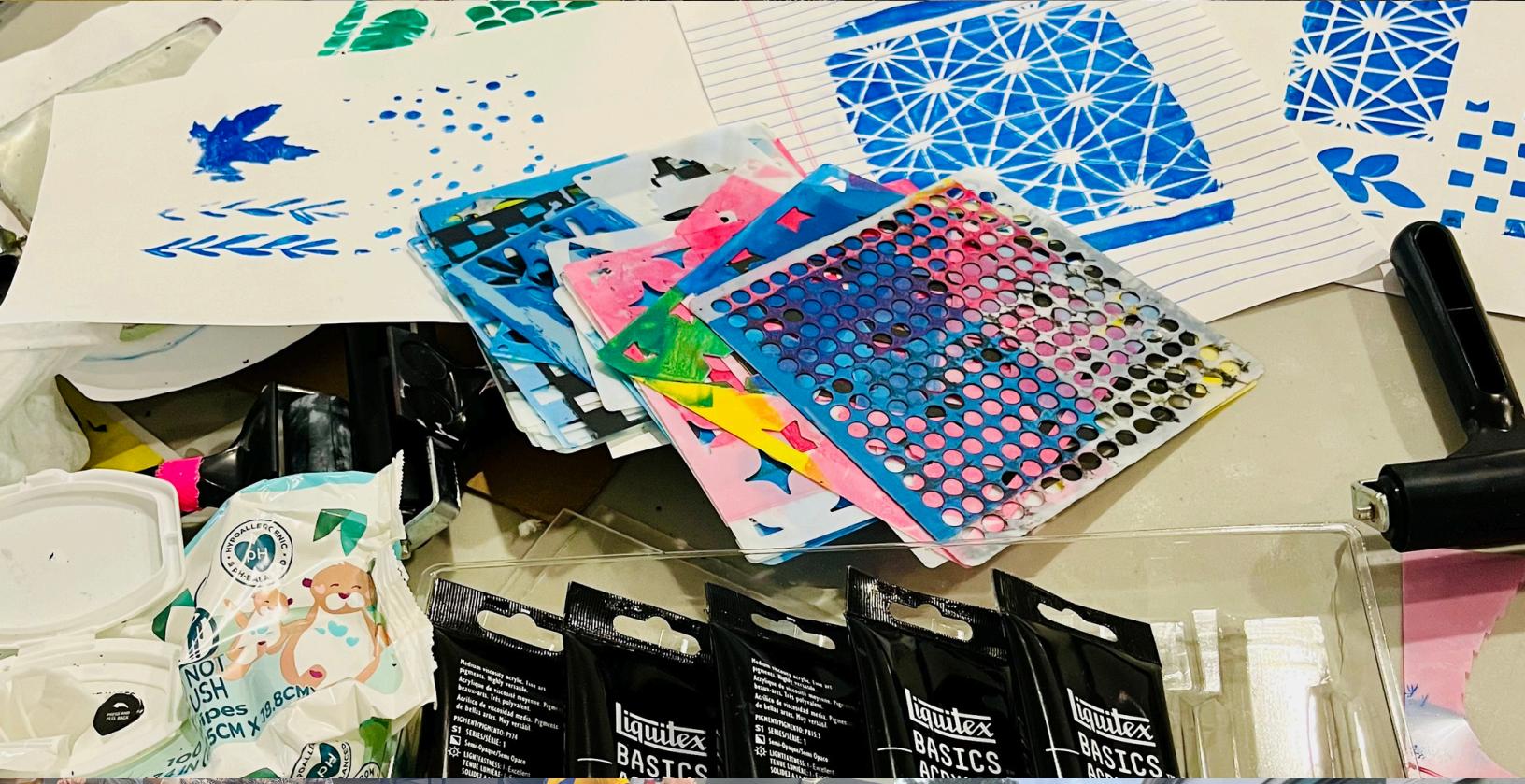


DVD Circulation

1. Oh Canada
2. Conclave
3. Wicked
4. The Return
5. Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy

Most Requested Titles

1. "The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny" - Kiran Desai
2. "The Correspondent" - Virginia Evans
3. "The Widow" - John Grisham
4. "The Black Wolf" - Louise Penny
5. "The Proving Ground" - Michael Connelly



VOLUNTEERS

The library continues to be fortunate to have a full slate of very dedicated and highly dependable volunteers. We have 27 volunteers, including several new ones and many who have been assisting the library for years. They shelve items, process interlibrary loans, repair books and tend to the grounds and pollinator gardens. All of them bring energy and enthusiasm to their jobs each week, consistently inform staff when they cannot come in and are willing to substitute when others are absent. We've even received volunteer applications from interested community members who we can't "employ" at this time because our openings are currently full!

All of the volunteer hours are recorded each day and reported at the end of the fiscal year to the state. These numbers can help the library receive more state funding. This year, volunteers worked 1,449 hours in total.

To recognize volunteers' efforts, we hosted an appreciation party this year in August and thanked each of them with a small gift just before the holidays. All of our volunteers are truly key to keeping the library in order on a daily basis.

On behalf of everyone at the David & Joyce Milne Public Library, thank you to our volunteers for all of your hard work and dedication!

Thank You for 20+ Years of service from these volunteers!

Judy Madden - 25 Years

Yumi Farwell - 23 Years

Judy Hall - 22 Years



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

20.

Internships at the library are about more than just learning a job – they are an opportunity for young people and emerging professionals to discover how important libraries are to our community. Interns quickly realize that libraries are far more than books on shelves. They are vibrant centers of learning, creativity, technology, and connection, serving as a place where people of all ages can explore ideas, develop skills, and find support.

Our interns engage with the community every day. They talk with patrons to understand their needs, assist with one-on-one technology sessions, and help ensure that everyone can access the resources and programs they need. Behind the scenes, interns contribute to projects such as updating our website, planning and supporting library programs, assisting with grant-writing, and participating in committees. Through these experiences, they gain a clear view of how a modern library operates and the many ways it serves as a hub for the community.

As full members of the library team, interns attend staff meetings, collaborate on projects, and bring fresh perspectives to help shape library programs and services. They develop valuable skills in communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership – all while learning what it takes to make a library successful and responsive to community needs.

The internship program benefits the library and the community as well. Interns help us provide better services, assist with important initiatives, and contribute ideas that improve our work. In return, they gain hands-on experience, professional skills, and a deeper understanding of the vital role libraries play in everyday life. By the end of their internship, participants not only leave with real-world skills – they leave with a new appreciation for the library as a cornerstone of the community, a place where learning, creativity, and connection come together to make a difference for everyone.

This past year, we were proud to welcome six outstanding interns who contributed their energy, ideas, and talents to our work. Their dedication and enthusiasm made a real impact on our programs, patrons, and staff. We are incredibly grateful for their hard work and commitment, and we thank them for being such an important part of our library family.

Valen Freitas, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts – Community Empowerment Intern
Val has been a driving force on a few of our committees, spearheading the development of a plan for a dedicated sensory space, facilitating community conversations to better understand our patrons' needs, and offering a compassionate, attentive ear to both patrons and staff. We're excited to welcome Valen back to the library for the Spring 2026 semester.

Douglas Piñeda Gutierrez, Williams College - Technology & Digital Literacy Intern

Although Douglas's primary tenure with us was in 2024, he continued for a few weeks into 2025. He quickly became a beloved presence, leading a variety of technology classes at the library, with a particular impact in 1:1 Tech Sessions. Douglas also always had his camera with him, so all our thanks to him for the staff headshots on our website!

Madysen Hawley, Williams College - Library Services & Engagement Intern

Madysen joined us for the Summer of 2025 and quickly became involved in nearly every aspect of library work - assisting patrons, writing grants, participating on committees, supporting outreach events, helping with daily operations and programs, and more. She continued in the fall, leading 1:1 Tech Sessions and becoming an increasingly relied-upon member of the team. We're excited to welcome Madysen back to the library for the Spring 2026 semester.

Aunonto Rahman, Williams College - Education Outreach & Tech Support Intern

Aunonto joined us during Williams' Winter Study in January 2025, leading technology and digital resources classes for patrons of all ages. He also provided 1:1 Tech Sessions, offering personalized guidance that helped patrons gain confidence with new tools and resources. Aunonto returned for several months afterwards to assist with 1:1 Tech Sessions.

Shirel Quintanilla Raymond, Williams College - Web Technologies Intern

Shirel joined us during Williams' Winter Study in January 2025 and played a key role in developing our new website, which launched in March 2025. She personally coded numerous features across the site and single-handedly built our entire Thingdom page - a remarkable achievement!

Daniel Reyes, Williams College - Web Technologies Intern

Daniel joined us for the Summer of 2025, enhancing the library's user experience by working behind the scenes and improving our catalog, leading coding and digital literacy classes, and supporting patrons through 1:1 Tech Sessions.

We sincerely thank all of our interns for their dedication, creativity, and the meaningful contributions they made to the library this year!

- The David & Joyce Milne Public Library Staff

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' "Looking Forward"

The Trustees of the Milne Library thank everyone for their patronage and support in 2025. We are so excited to see the diversity of programming as the entirety of the library staff works to expand the breadth and depth of our impact. We are happy that so many community groups are utilizing our space in novel ways, and we look for more opportunities to serve in this capacity. We are also thankful to be working more closely with the town DPW in the maintenance of the physical library, and utilizing their expertise in the plethora of repairs that our infrastructure requires. The trustees look forward to a busy 2026 as we dive into the details of the current state of our facility and how we can rise to meeting the needs and wants of our patrons and the entire town.

One positive development of 2025 at the library was seeing each member of the library staff expand their role in ways that took advantage of each person's expertise and passions. We have seen the development of a crochet club, a puzzle library, a new outdoor recreation area (with a delightful gazebo) and countless other programs and features at the Milne. Our yoga classes continue to be popular, our Library of Things grows ever more robust, and we have developed a teen room as a separate division from the children's library, with programming and events specific to the teen demographic.

The J-IDEA committee (Justice, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility) is run by young and enthusiastic library staff and is increasingly working to make the library a leader in the community. We have partnered with Remedy Hall to create two satellite locations (one in the teen room) that offer essentials to Williamstown residents in need. We look forward to using 2026 as an opportunity to further establish the library as a positive community hub.

Micah Manary
Chair, Board of Trustees





I like the community connections our library is making for me. Within the last month, I have been able to connect my own artwork to elementary kids to collage art to collage art on the walls by Emily Gold. Thank you Milne Library.
- Sally, Library Patron

