

Date: May 14th, 2025

To: David & Joyce Milne Public Library Board of Trustees

Prepared by: Angela Zimmermann, Library Director



Administrative and Staff Reports for May 14th Board Meeting

Library Director, Angela Zimmermann

We have some exciting news from the past month to share: we've been awarded the 2025 Sustainable & Resilient New England Library Grant in the amount of \$12,000! This grant, developed with the work of our Sustainability Committee in mind, will support one of our newest green initiatives - to bring TerraCycle to our library. .

TerraCycle is a global leader in innovative recycling solutions, dedicated to eliminating the idea of waste by finding ways to recycle materials that are not typically accepted through traditional curbside programs. Through this grant, we will be able to offer TerraCycle Zero Waste Boxes to the community, giving patrons the opportunity to responsibly dispose of hard-to-recycle items like snack wrappers, oral care products, K-Cups, and more.

In the coming months then, we'll be focused on implementing both the Sustainable & Resilient New England Library Grant (\$12,000) and the Libraries Transforming Communities Grant (\$10,000) which we've both received.

In other possibly even more exciting news, we've been informed that Laureyns United has received the new boilers. The installation date has not yet been scheduled but hopefully it'll be before winter! The temporary boilers have also been removed from the back courtyard. Again, thanks to Alex our Building & Grounds Supervisor and DPW for their work with this.

Building and Grounds

Various other building and grounds initiatives include:

- The new sign has been installed outside!
- We've been working with some of our amazing gardening volunteers who generously dedicate their time to keeping our grounds both sustainable and beautiful. We've been leaning heavily on their expertise to eventually introduce new signage for the front pollinator gardens - thanks to Brianna, our Marketing & Communications Strategist for designing signs that align perfectly with our current branding. Patrons will be able to browse a folder, scan a code or link back to a dedicated page on our website to learn more.
- After speaking with Craig Clough, Head of DPW, I've been informed they are preparing to move forward with the window and door project in the near future.
- Mulch has already been delivered for the season and will be placed around the grounds.
- Sticks and brush piles will be removed soon as well. Thanks to Alex for his diligent care of the grounds!
- New locks were placed on the Thingdom door as well as the doors entering the Thingdom from both the staff room and the Board room.

Personnel

Nearly all performance evaluations have been completed and new goals have been set for the coming year.

I did end up making a reporting change within the organizational chart in that the Teen Librarian now reports directly to me.

We recently said goodbye to our Tech Time interns for the semester and extend our sincere thanks to Douglas Piñeda Gutierrez and Aunonto Rahman for their outstanding service. Their support was sooo deeply appreciated by the public. Douglas, who has been with us since last June, will be graduating from Williams College next month, and we wish him all the best. We'll stay in touch with Aunonto to see if he can return at some point, but we're also excited to welcome two new Williams students who will be joining us as summer interns.

We're also pleased to share that Val will continue with us through the summer as our Community Resource Services intern.

And a reminder that we are closed on Friday, May 16th for a staff in-service training day.

Various

Pride Committee

The Town's Pride Committee has been meeting on a weekly basis and a couple of FYIs for the Board:

- The flag-raising will take place on Sunday, June 1st at 1:00 pm at Town Hall. After that, we will have a community picnic on our front lawn: food, music, lawn games, bouncy house, activities, etc. The library will be closed for browsing during this time, but staff and volunteers will be coming and going from the building to grab items we may need.
- On Sunday, June 8th at 1:00 pm, I will be opening the library from 1:00- 2:30 pm for a Drag Queen Story Hour. Staff and volunteers will be onsite to assist. Staff have also been equipped with prepared language in advance, in case we receive any questions or concerns about the reasons for offering this program.

Citizens' Academy

Our collaboration with the League of Women Voters and the Town of Williamstown to bring a Citizens' Academy to our Town officially kicked off on Wednesday, May 7th at 6:30 pm with the event *"Who Does What": A Closer Look into Town Hall with Bob Menicocci, Town Manager*. The second event will be on Tuesday, May 13th will be *"The Whys and Hows" of our Annual Town Meeting with Elisabeth Goodman, Town Moderator*.

(Town Manager Bob Menicocci, Polly Macpherson from the League of Women Voters, and I recorded a segment with Willinet to promote the events and explain the origins of the Citizens' Academy. However, we were informed a few days later that a user error occurred - the correct camera input was not selected after the shot was set. We couldn't get together to re-record before the events.)

July 4th Parade

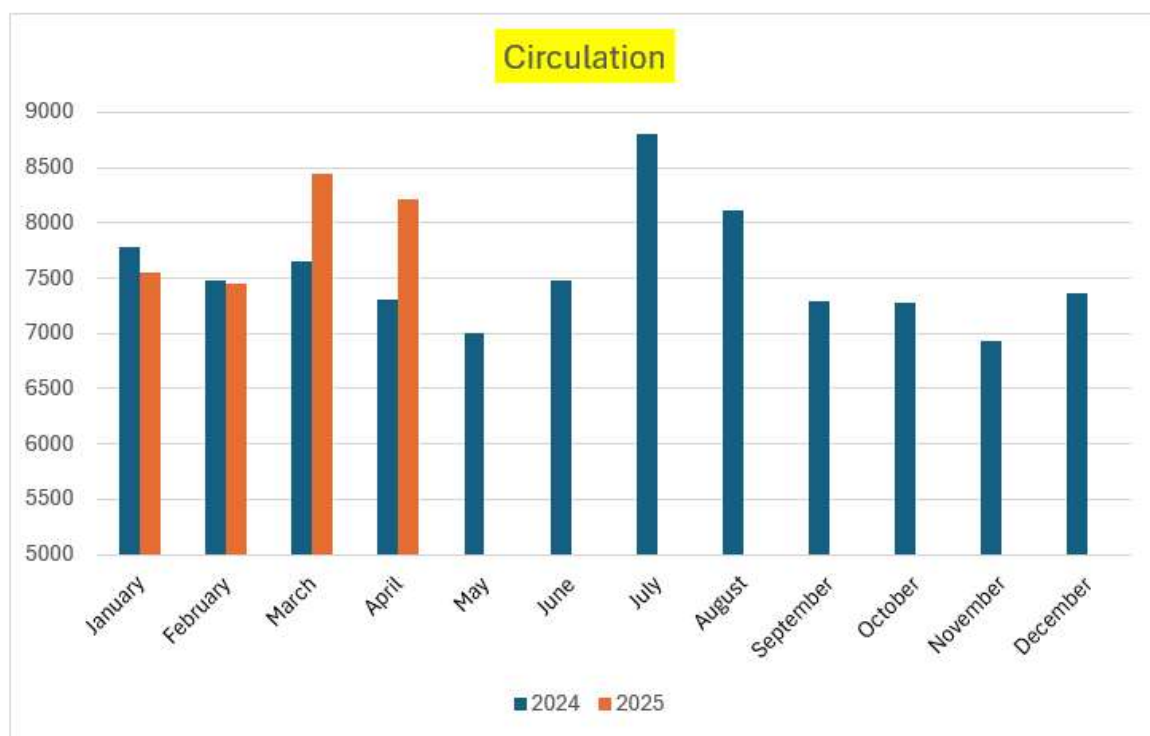
We're already signed-up for the July 4th parade - so which of the Trustees will be walking with us? :)

COVID Tests

Thanks to a lead from Trustee Della Rocca, we've received 300 COVID tests (good through February 2027) from the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

In closing, there's a really great energy at the Milne right now - lots of great things are happening, community partnerships are growing, and even more exciting stuff is on the way. Big thanks to the staff - their creativity, enthusiasm, and love for what they do are what make the Milne such a special place every day.

Milne By the Numbers



	March 2025	April 2025
Circulation	8,450	8,213
New Library Card Registrations	31	29
Monthly Door Count	16,100	15,475
Comics Plus checkouts*	8	3

Creativebug (sessions)*	0	0
Hoopla checkouts	260	223
Kanopy checkouts	238	204
Libby checkouts	2,500	2,239
Mango Language total sessions	35	48
Meeting room usage total	138	132
Newsletter total subscribers	2,847	2,850
Newsletter unique opens	5,879	5,824
New York Times activations	81	Email sent requesting stats
New York Times sessions	438	Email sent requesting stats
Wall Street Journal active users*	3	6
Wall Street Journal page views*	109	210
Website unique visitors	1,869	1,855
Website site sessions	3,523	3,289
Second Chance Composting Participants	27	27

*These databases will be eliminated for the 2026 fiscal year.

Assistant Director, Kirsten Rose

Outside of all regular duties, April was dominated by lots of cataloging. I have begun the process to genrefy Romance (which included learning how to batch edit in Evergreen!) and collecting ideas from the allregions listserv about how other libraries have approached genrefication.

I completely updated our Ingram Fiction Standing Order list - updating old authors, removing some who are no longer writing, and adding new authors to the list

I also spent some time preparing a May display for Jewish American Heritage Month.

Circulation Manager, Jenna English

Not a whole lot to say this month. I was out sick for 3 days, worked 1 day, & then had a 4 day weekend during Easter Week. Fortunately I was able to catch up fairly quickly!

- Thingdom: As one would expect, outdoor items (Outdoor Recreation, Gardening) are now circulating again! Some new items have been added to Outdoor Recreation as well. I expect these will become popular items.
- I attended the CW MARS Annual Circulation Meeting last Tuesday. A wide variety of circulation-related topics were discussed, including Library of Things, Blu Ray purchases, & patron privacy. It was an interesting discussion and I enjoyed having time to chat with my peers from other libraries in the network.
- I attended a collection development meeting at the beginning of the month. A variety of topics were discussed, mainly the fate of the lease books program, weeding, & genre-fication.
- Patrons are continuing to enjoy the seed library!

*From the Adult Services Department:
Adult Services Librarian, Kira Williams*

In April almost all of our growing number of recurring programs experienced steady or increased attendance numbers. The only exception to that is the Board Game group with Steve Kurzban, so he has decided to have his last session in June. Even though we switched the date to Saturday, he has not had enough people attend to make it worth his while.

Of the one-time events, three were about gardening to complement the new seed library (which is still seeing decent traffic). Seed Savers Exchange presented virtually about getting started with seeds, and Sharon Wyrick, retired founder of Many Forks Farm, provided two workshops. One was for beginner gardeners and the other was a discussion group for all gardeners. While attendance was low, interest was high. She donated her time and may even be interested in coming back a few times during the growing months.

Rocio and I again hosted Poetry Open Mic Night, with Chris Hantmann, a local poet, MCing again. Those who were there had a lot of fun. About six people read poems, and twelve people attended in total. Related to that, a wide range of repetitive, and very creative, poems were submitted and displayed in our poetry "gallery" in the Community Room.

I also received more volunteer applications and trained several shelveers as well, so we now have a full slate of volunteers, including a new taker for a shift on Saturdays! Our enthusiastic, dedicated volunteers never cease to amaze me.

The sustainability committee met again too. Great news - we won the grant in the amount of \$12,000 to purchase Zero Waste Boxes from Terracycle! We're also looking forward to the Get Energized Williamstown! event in May, a tabling event in partnership with Energize Williamstown, and starting a regular sustainability discussion group in the near future. We will meet again in May, and hope to continue to meet monthly.

Adult Program Attendance Numbers:

Program	# of attendees
Dementia-Friendly Caregivers Support (monthly)	8
Mahjong at the Milne (weekly) (3 sessions)	43
(More) Mahjong at the Milne (bimonthly)	24
Berkshire Gamers Board Game Group (monthly)	4
Tech Times with Interns Douglas and Aunonto (multiple, individual 1-hour sessions)	13
Gentle Yoga (3 sessions)	31
All Levels Yoga (1 session)	9
Starting with a Seed virtual webinar	5
Getting your Vegetable Garden Started	4
Gardening Roundtable Discussion	4
Open Mic Poetry/Music Night	12
Repetitive Poem submissions	14
Poetry Zine Workshop	2
Friday Film: Conclave	5
April's Artist Reception	12
Knitting group (weekly)	19
Spanish Conversation Group, ¡Hablemos español!	5
English Conversation Group (weekly)	8
Total:	222

Marketing & Communications Strategist, Brianna Christie

During the month of April, our new outreach materials arrived! These include T-shirts, mugs, a travel tumbler, pencil cases, drawstrings bags, and a banner sign. All staff have been given their own T-shirt, mugs, and one other item to represent the Milne! In addition to our tote bags, we are also selling our T-shirt, mugs, tumbler- and pencil pouches to patrons.



After meeting with Angie to set annual goals, I have begun tracking the library's digital engagement. This being increases/decreases of social media followers, newsletter subscribers, and website visitors. Likewise, with the implementation of my role, I have begun drafting a Marketing and Communication guide. The purpose of this guide is to allow for anyone to manage, market, and communicate Milne's happenings in case the Marketing and Communication Strategist is out of office, or has other immediate tasks.

The following guide reviews the David and Joyce Milne Public Library's 2025 brand guidelines in relation to print and digital materials and is subject to change and/or be updated as deemed necessary.

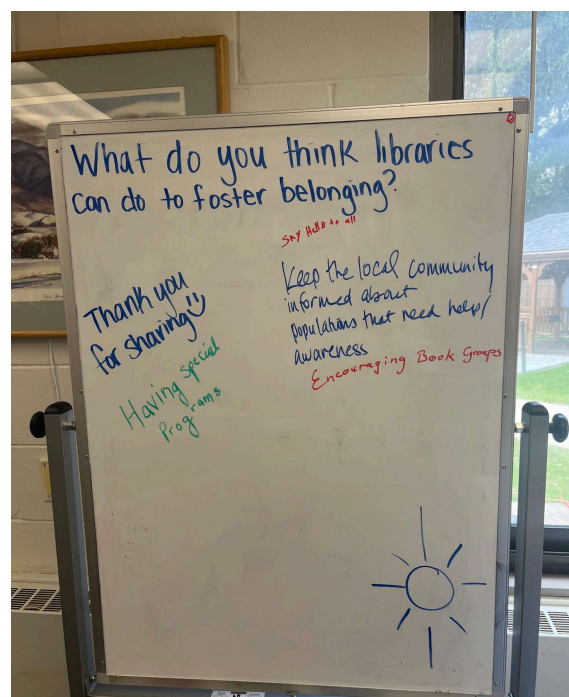
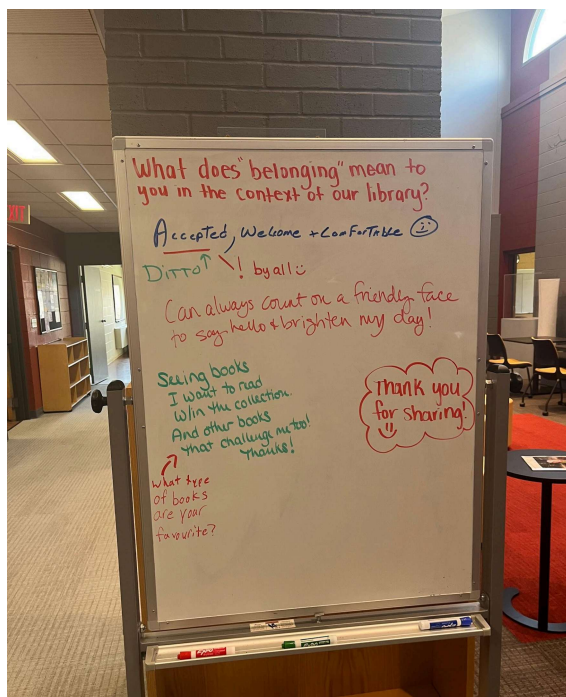
Lastly, intersecting with the DEI committee, I have started updating our print materials to be more accessible to various audiences. Our print calendars now have symbols for color-blind patrons and soon, new flyers will include a statement regarding accessibility at the library.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Brianna Christie

During the month of April, the DEI Committee met twice, April 1st and April 15th. Our April 1st meeting discussed growing needs we have collectively noticed from patrons in the library, these being food and financial insecurity. The committee also discussed ways in which we can hold our work "accountable" and make these initiatives known, not only to our library staff and patrons, but the Williamstown community as a whole.

In our April 1st meeting, based on our discussion surrounding food insecurity, we began brainstorming a "Free Little Pantry" at the Milne. This initiative is still in the developmental phase, and we are going to launch it in May. Thanks to the generosity of Remedy Hall, we have been given a mini fridge that will be housed in the front satellite location of the hall.

During National Library Week (after our April 1st meeting) we launched two "White Board 'Talk Backs'" for patrons to answer questions surrounding belonging in the library (see below). We got great responses which will help us as a committee in the future.



Lastly, we have launched our first quarterly committee report (see attached). The report will allow for more transparency and accountability for the important work we are doing. The report highlights updates, grant application & awards, initiatives, and more that happened in the previous four months.

*From the Children's Department:
Children's Librarian, Debbie Baker*

April was fun! We hosted Leah Balzer and her puppet friends again, stuffed and dyed some teddy bears, explored the world of abstract art with some help from the folks at the Frelinghuysen Morris House, and hosted a "Chicken Trot" egg hunt on the lawn.





Work continued on refining the July/August summer reading calendar in preparation for our visit to WES and it's finally ready for printing. More info on that next month.

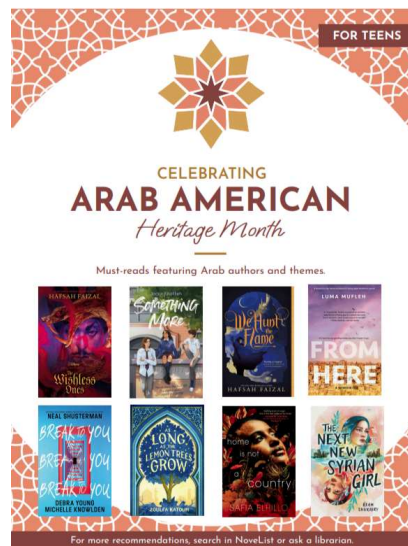
Teen Librarian, Rocio Carrera

Poetry Month is one of our favorite months of the year. Our library-wide poetry month challenge this year was to create a Repetitive Poem. Patrons picked up a packet at the library that included an explanation of Repetitive Poetry, examples by established poets (and Homer Simpson!), and writing prompts to get the creative juices flowing. Over 70 poetry packets were distributed throughout the month, including 20 packets that were delivered to Mt. Greylock Regional School English and Spanish language departments. The returned poems were entered into a prize drawing and will be displayed in the Community Room through the month of May. I will include final stats on returned poems in May.

Within the Teen Room we had two displays featuring poetry collections and novels written in verse.



Our main display for April was *Celebrating Arab American Heritage Month*.



For a more in-depth look into the Arab American communities throughout the US and links to books written by and about Arab Americans, teens can visit the Teen Blog Post: [April Celebrates Arab American Heritage!](#)



Josie Bay (Teen volunteer extraordinaire) and I hosted our first Spanish storytime: *Cuentos, Canciones y Arte*. Josie read a selection of 5 Spanish language books, I sang songs and told a felt board story and we followed with a laminated bookmarks with our 7 participants. This was a

late evening event and our next spanish storytime will take place on a Saturday afternoon which we hope will be a better time for more families.

Afterschool snacks were as popular as ever with over 100 teens participating throughout the month!

During the Spring Break vacation, I hosted the 3rd installment of Friendship Bracelets for kids, parents and teens. It was a very popular craft! Participation included 9 teens/tweens; 25 kids and 18 adults. We made around 90 bracelets and many necklaces as well! I also hosted a showing of the Disney film in English and Spanish. 18 attendees enjoyed this fun film and our brand new popcorn machine.

Children and Teen Program Attendance Numbers:

Program	# of kids	# of teens	# of families (adults)	# of programs
Storytimes	22			8
Cuentos, Canciones, y Arte	3		4	1
Spring Chicken Trot	110		61	1
Friendship Bracelets: Drop-In	25	9	13	1
Puppet Storytime (Leah Balzer)	11		9	1
Tie-Dye Bears	19			2
Workshop - Art Detectives	14			1
Movie - Moana (English / Spanish)			18	2
Total Attendance: 318				17

Building & Grounds Supervisor, Alex Charron

The propane heaters and tanks have been removed and repairs to the damaged areas of the courtyard has begun. I have started fixing the damage caused by the propane trucks and the equipment used to install and remove them (lots of divots in our grass/grounds).

New locks have been installed on all entry doors to the Thingdom, also the lock in the entry door to the back vestibule has been repaired.

The hole left by the removal of the air conditioning unit in the main circulation area has been repaired and repainted as well as various other areas of touch-up painting.

Patt's Disc Repair Station has been put back in order in the west wing. This was displayed due to the temporary heating solution.

The new library sign has been installed and the old posts have been removed.

We have received our yearly delivery of mulch which will be placed weather-permitting.

A new filter was also installed in the water fountain.

Aside from that it has been mostly business as usual with daily requirements and set-ups and clean-ups from our programs.