

ACUSHNET PUBLIC LIBRARY

Though grateful for a successful 2020 and 2021 in spite of all the challenges, staff and library users alike embraced the sense of normalcy that 2022 brought back to the library. The library was open 45 hours per week throughout the year, and the takeout service was still available upon request. By early April, the Board of Trustees voted to allow staff-led programs indoors, and in August, they removed the reduced capacity limit for the Community Room.

2022 highlights include:

- The beautiful pavilion, built with ARPA funds, located on the library's back lawn and constructed by the Town's Building Department with assistance from the DPW, was completed just in time for summer. The inaugural performance by the Ford Middle School Chorus, led by Mr. Brian Shanbrun, was held on June 13, 2022.
- The Summer Concert Series returned with a 10-week reign. Musical acts included Pearly Baker Band, Hot Club Cheese Roll and George Piva and Friends. Over 1,000 people were in attendance throughout the series.
- The Friends of the Library sponsored programs in the summer and fall including Flying High Dogs, visits by local authors Maureen Boyle and Tim Weisberg and a decorative wreath-making workshop.
- The Board of Trustees unanimously voted to go fine free in December!

The Decision to Go Fine Free and What It Means for Patrons

The Library staff and Board of Trustees were most pleased to announce the decision to go fine free in December 2022. The effective date of 12/21/2022 corresponded with the library's 7 year anniversary at 232 Middle Road. Existing fines on Acushnet Public Library items were waived. In going fine free, Acushnet joined the growing ranks of fine free libraries within the SAILS Network and throughout the state and country. The decision truly makes the library an equitable community resource.

A few key factors in deciding to go fine free:

- Revenue from overdue fines had been steadily decreasing since SAILS implemented an automatic renewal policy in 2018.
- In FY22, overdue fines accounted for less than 0.5% of the library's total operating budget.
- The goodwill generated from the new policy is far more important.
- The decision doesn't impact the library's budget or create a need to request additional funding from the Town of Acushnet.

Every item checked out still has a due date. Items continue to renew automatically and for as long as renewals are available. Overdue fines are still charged on Museum Passes and Equipment, such as the library's telescope. Overdue fines are still charged on items borrowed directly at other libraries that are still charging fines. Patrons are still responsible for damaged or lost items.

Library Mission and Offerings – Materials and Services

The mission of the Acushnet Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning and strengthen the entire community, through its materials, programs and services, in a welcoming space that is open to all.

The library offers books, DVDs, audiobooks, music CDs, eBooks, newspapers, magazines, public computers, Wi-Fi, online databases, and mobile device and technology assistance, all at no cost. There are two ways to download books, DVDs, music, and more to personal devices and, again, at no cost to Acushnet Public Library cardholders: Libby and hoopla. Subscriptions to The Standard Times and the Sunday Boston Globe are held. Patrons are able to read the newspapers at their leisure in the Periodicals Room. Printers, a copy machine and a fax machine are available to the public for a small fee.

Library patrons have access to two Study Rooms, which are available to borrow in two hour blocks daily. The Community Room is also available to the public and attracts local and state non-profit groups to hold meetings and workshops. A marked rise in the usage of both the Study Rooms and Community Room was noted in 2022, particularly in the second half of the year.

The Library currently holds visitor passes to Buttonwood Park Zoo, Massachusetts Parks Pass Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Heritage Museums & Gardens in Sandwich, Robbins Museum of Archaeology, Roger Williams Park Zoo, and USS Constitution Museum. Patrons are able to check out passes, which provide free or discounted admission to these destinations. The pass program is primarily funded by the Friends of the Acushnet Public Library.

To obtain a free library card, please present a photo ID and proof of address. Children ages 5+ may have a card with parental permission. A card is not required to use materials and services within the library or to attend programs.

State Certification and Interlibrary Loan Benefit for Patrons

The Library maintained state certification in 2022. Required: a Director with a Master's Degree in Library Science from an accredited institution and certification by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners; a minimum of 40 hours open per week; a minimum of 16% of the total budget expended on materials; a municipal appropriation that increases by 2.5% each year over a three year average.

Certification is of the utmost importance, as it entitles Acushnet residents to borrow materials from other Massachusetts libraries and qualifies the Town to apply for state aid and grants to libraries, which allows the library to provide residents with a wider variety of materials and services.

The Library is also a member of the Massachusetts Library System. MLS provides delivery of materials between libraries, regional reference and inter-library loan service, on-line databases, staff training, Summer Reading materials, and professional consultants at no charge to the library or the Town of Acushnet.

SAILS Library Network Membership

The Library is a full voting member of the SAILS Library Network. Through SAILS, library patrons have access to the collections of over 70 libraries. In addition to the automated system, SAILS provides cataloging services, technical support and continuing education. The SAILS system allows users to search the catalog, reserve materials, and renew items from a home PC or on a mobile device through the SAILS website or app.

General Information, Staff and Board of Trustees

The Library is open 45 hours per week year-round. Hours of operation are Monday – Thursday, 10:30am – 7:30pm, Friday, 1-5pm and Saturday 9:30am – 2:30pm. The telephone number is 508-998-0270, and the FAX number is 508-998-0271. The website is www.acupl.org. Find the library on social media: www.facebook.com/AcushnetPublicLibrary and @acushnetpubliclibrary on Instagram.

Staff of the Acushnet Public Library: Dina M. St. Pierre, Director, M.S.L.I.S., Sandra Medeiros, Patron Services Associate; Melissa Freitas (resigned in December), Ellen Hamel, Dolores Henry (retired in October), Ann Lapienski, Kate Lindia, Kimi Martin and Lesley Perkins, Library Technicians; Richard Sevasin, Custodian.

The six-member Board of Trustees has the custody and management of the Library and all related property. The Board typically meets monthly. Acushnet Public Library Board of Trustees (2022-2023): Jennifer Alves (Chair), Diane Ferreira, Nancy Francis, Danielle Guillemette, Joan Howland and Stephen Reale.

The Acushnet community is thanked for its continued support of the library. Library staff members are committed to providing excellent service and look forward to expanding program offerings for all ages in 2023 and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina M. St. Pierre, Library Director and the Acushnet Public Library Board of Trustees

LIBRARY STATISTICAL REPORT 2022

General

Children’s Programs Held.....	71
Attendance at Children’s Programs.....	1,862
Tween/Teen Programs Held.....	2
Attendance at Tween/Teen Programs.....	100
Adult Programs Held.....	34
Attendance at Adult Programs.....	1,063
Take and Make Craft Kits.....	325
Computers Available for Public Use and with Internet Access.....	9
Computer Sessions.....	887
Community Room Use.....	34
Study Room Use.....	362
Patrons Registered	3,556
Door Count.....	20,740
Website Views.....	13,274

Materials Holdings (Number of Items)

Books.....	21,446
Periodical Subscriptions	43
DVDs.....	3,548
Audio.....	599
Downloadable eBooks/Audio/Video/Magazines (does not include hoopla).....	62,109

Circulation (Times Borrowed)

Books – Adult and Teen	24,043
Books – Children	36,201
Periodicals	3,638
DVDs.....	8,749
Audio.....	1,788
eBooks/eMagazines	5,864
Downloadable Audio/Video	5,085
Museum Passes.....	144
Hot Spots (Jan.-Sept. only).....	115
Total Items Circulated: 85,627	