

KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 5:30 P.M.

AGENDA

1.	Call to order	
2.	Approval of the August 24, 2021 Annual Meeting minutes	2
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4.	Adjournment	

**Keene Public Library
Trustee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, Aug 26, 2025**

Annual Meeting

Present: Trustees Bill Stroup, Jane Pitts, Paul Henkel, Kathleen Packard, Don Caruso, Hollie Seiler, Judy Putnam, Justin Somma, Katherine Baer, Pam Russell-Slack.

Also Present: Marti Fiske, Library Director; Susan Bloom, Assistant Library Director, Jay Kahn, Keene Mayor

President Bill Stroup called annual meeting to order at 5:01. He asked those present to identify themselves for Mayor Kahn.

2024 Annual Meeting minute approval: Justin moved that the minutes be accepted; Kathleen Packard seconded. All approved

Bill invited Committee members to share any highlights or comments about the 2024-2025 Annual Report.

Review of Annual Report (see full report for more complete discussion):

Treasurer Report – Jane pointed out that it is a cumulation of the 4 quarterly reports discussed at previous meetings. She highlighted the large number of gifts In Memoria over the past year. She also noted that the Trustee investments came out ahead for the year.

Building & Grounds: Paul gave overview of the completed Cohen Hall acoustic project. Paul recently went to program that highlighted the great improvement to the Hall acoustics.

Community Outreach: Katherine reported on working with Amy and volunteering for events when available.

Fine Arts – Judy listed the year's achievements using memorial gifts, including display cabinet, reading nook and framing of illustrator David Weisner's drawing.

Policy – Kathleen highlighted activity of past year that included three new policies and four revised policies. Keene's policies are looked at as models for other libraries throughout the state.

Friends – Judy reported that they are going strong.

Horatio – Bill reported that they are focusing on the nature component vs. the museum. They hope to do more with the museum soon.

Nominations: Motion for new nominations. Bill went through the nominations for the 2025-2026 year. This included Bill Stroup as Chair, Justin Somma as VP, Jane Pitts as Treasurer and Hollie Seiler as Secretary. Judy moved and Don seconded. The Motion was Approved by all.

Kathleen brought up the need for some clearer nominations guidelines in the Bylaws and hopes the Board can have a bylaw review in the upcoming year.

Director's Report – Marti reported that Trustees and the Friend's contributed 4.6% to KPL budget.

These funds are extremely helpful for unexpected expenditures. She also reported on the huge amount of time spent tracking legislative action impacting libraries and expects it to be the same for the next legislative session.

Susan commented on how much she has been enjoying watching the staff work together.

Katherine moved and Justin seconded, that we accept the 2024-2025 Annual Report. The motion passed unanimously.

Annual meeting adjourned 5:33

Katherine Baer
Secretary

President's Report
Keene Public Library Board of Trustees
Annual Report 2026

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Keene Public Library for 2025-2026. Inside you will see reports from each of the Board of Trustee subcommittees on the past year's activities, as well as staff reports from each department within our Library. These circulation and activity reports help to give an overview of another active year of innovation and continuity at our Library. The reader will find more attention to our "Library of Things" and Makerspace activity than in annual reports from many years ago, and that is a positive development. Readers will also find discussions of other core parts of our mission: book circulation, access to information in various forms through the expertise of our staff, and the thoughtful and ever-expanding use of our Library campus by groups from around our community.

As President of the Board of Trustees, I am honored to be associated with such a vital and community-serving institution as our Library. Whether you are looking for a particular policy change or Library statistic or settling down to read in more detail, this report documents a rich moment in our Library's continuing history.

Welcome.

Dr. William Stroup

Annual Report

Keene Public Library Trustees

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Opening Balance \$ 56,393.95

Income

Gifts:

General Library Support	\$	1,816.00
Memorial Gifts	\$	8,900.00
For Community Environmental Engagement	\$	1,000.00
For Community Reads Program	\$	760.00
For Books (including Rotary Bookshelf)	\$	410.00
Lipsky Restricted Book Fund	\$	350.00
Thomas P. Wright Fund	\$	500.00

Grants:

CCCD Monadnock Grows	\$	2,600.00
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Distributions:

Lichman Trust	\$	250.00
NHCF Endowment	\$	7,056.61
Choe Restricted Fund	\$	550.00

FKPL Reimbursement	\$	13,827.24
Investment Income	\$	23,631.73
Money Market Dividends	\$	2,298.45

Total Income \$ 63,950.03

Expenses

General Library Support	\$	5,097.57
Trustee Supported Projects	\$	871.65
Fine Arts	\$	-
Buildings & Grounds	\$	8,507.04
Director's Discretionary	\$	3,000.00
Staff Development	\$	8,216.70
NHLTA	\$	490.00
Outreach	\$	3,630.95
Miscellaneous	\$	37.38
Maintenance Reserve	\$	200.00
FKPL Expenses	\$	13,827.24
Lipsky Gifts to Restricted Fund	\$	350.00
Grant expenditures:		
CCCD Monadnock Grows	\$	1,543.52
C&S Grocers	\$	656.00

Total Expenses \$ 46,428.05

Closing Balance \$ 73,915.93 *

**The Edward Jones Checking Account Statement balance was \$79,398.83 as at 6/30/2026 . \$5,482.90 of FY26 June expense and P-card credit items did not clear this statement, and will appear on July statement of FY27.*

Gift Encumbered balances	Balance 7/1/25	Received	Expended	Balance 06/30/26	
Unrestricted Gifts					
In memory of Pam Bernard	\$0.00	\$1,050.00	\$0.00	\$1,050.00	
Other unrestricted gifts	\$4,003.34	\$2,166.00	-\$6,169.34	\$0.00	
Total:					\$1,050.00
Restricted Gifts					
UNH-COLSA Gift	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	
Community Reads Program Gifts	\$0.00	\$760.00	\$0.00	\$760.00	
Diana Greene Fund (Price Room)	\$0.00	\$7,500.00	\$0.00	\$7,500.00	
Hanna Fund (Green, Price Rooms)	\$1,265.45	\$0.00	-\$1,265.45 *	\$0.00	
Fox Memorial (Kay Fox Room)	\$1,004.00	\$0.00	-\$1,004.00 *	\$0.00	
Thomas P. Wright Fund (Wright Room)	\$1,500.00	\$500.00	-\$2,000.00 *	\$0.00	
Lichman Trust Distribution (Politics, Religion, Music, Race, History)	\$0.00	\$250.00	-\$250.00	\$0.00	
For Books (including Rotary Bookshelf)	\$0.00	\$410.00	-\$410.00	\$0.00	
For Makerspace	\$100.00	\$0.00	-\$100.00	\$0.00	
Total:					\$9,260.00
Trustee Encumbered balances	Balance 7/1/25	Encumbered in Budget	Expended	Balance 06/30/26	
For Outreach Programming	\$7,559.22	\$6,213.70	-\$3,630.95	\$10,141.97	
For Staff Development	\$6,800.08	\$3,500.00	-\$8,216.70	\$2,083.38	
For Strategic Planning	\$4,918.66	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$5,668.66	
For Maintenance Reserve	\$2,559.07	\$1,500.00	-\$200.00	\$3,859.07	
Total:					\$21,753.08
Grants	Balance 7/1/25	Received	Expended	Balance 06/30/26	
C&S Grocers	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	-\$656.00	\$344.00	
CCCD (Cheshire County Conservation District) Monadnock Grows	\$1,516.93	\$2,600.00	-\$1,543.52	\$2,573.41	
Total:					\$2,917.41
Total Encumbered:					\$34,980.49
Cash built up in Trustee's Principal-Restricted Account	Balance 7/1/25	Income	Expended	Balance 06/30/26	
Unrestricted Use					
Faulkner	\$5,845.14	\$1,029.55	\$0.00	\$6,874.69	
Green	\$33,465.53	\$6,695.79	\$0.00	\$40,161.32	
Thayer	\$8,332.57	\$1,049.59	\$0.00	\$9,382.16	
Total:				\$56,418.17	
Restricted Use					
Choe	\$2,029.02	\$288.73	-\$550.00 **	\$1,767.75	
Lipsky	\$2,308.31	\$413.40	\$0.00	\$2,721.71	
Total:				4,489.46	
Total Cash in Principal-Restricted Account:					\$60,907.63

*For lighting project

**For summer reading programming

Gifts, Grants, and Distributions to the Keene Public Library

Keene Public Library Trustees

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Gifts for General Library Support:

Anonymous Donors	\$166.00
Jonathan M. Bloom and Sheila S. Blair	\$500.00
Maria and Jeffrey Dahlman	\$25.00
Peter S. Espieffs	\$300.00
Helen and Patrick Heneghan	\$25.00
Carolyn Jones	\$500.00
Alex and Coleen Kossakoski	\$100.00
Charles Prigge	\$50.00
Penelope Shanks	\$100.00

Gift in Honor of Judy Putnam:

Allen and Ellen Mendelson	\$50.00
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Gifts in Memory of Cynthia Georgina:

Jean Kennedy and Richard Chamberlain	\$50.00
Dwight and Alison Fischer	\$30.00
Diane White	\$20.00

Gifts in Memory of Pam Bernard:

Antonia Andreoli	\$1,000.00
Yvette Yeager and Tom Bassarear	\$50.00
Carol Ripley	\$250.00

Gift in Memory of Dr. Diana Greene for enhancements to the Price Room:

Dr. Natalie Greene	\$7,500.00
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Gift for the Wright Reading Room:

Thomas P. Wright Fund	\$500.00
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Gifts to Keene Rotary Bookshelf program:

Thomas Ewing	\$50.00
Stephen and Linda Felder	\$50.00
Charles A Prigge	\$50.00
Cameron Tease	\$50.00
Louise Zerba	\$50.00

Gifts for Book Purchases:

Anne Francisco	\$100.00
Leonard and Frances Himmelberg	\$60.00

Gifts to Lipsky Book Fund

Aaron Lipsky	\$50.00
Dorothy and Nelson Saks	\$300.00

Gift to the Community Reads Program:

Savings Bank of Walpole	\$760.00
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Gift for Community Environmental Engagement:

University System of New Hampshire (UNH-COLSA)	\$1,000.00	\$13,736.00
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Grants Received:

CCCD Monadnock Grows	\$2,600.00	\$2,600.00
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Distribution from the Eugene Choe Restrictd Fund

\$550.00

Distribution from Jacob Lichman Trust

\$250.00

Distribution from NH Charitable Endowment Fund:

\$7,056.61 \$7,856.61

Portfolio Changes

Keene Public Library Trustees

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS:

	7/1/25	6/30/26
Investment Account		
Mutual Funds	\$396,476.01	\$425,803.33
Cash	\$2,659.93	\$2,748.16
Permanently Restricted Funds Account		
Mutual Funds	\$192,077.35	\$207,855.20
Cash	\$51,980.57	\$60,907.63
Checking Account		
Cash	\$56,393.95	\$79,398.83
Total Value	\$699,587.81	\$776,713.15

Trustee Budget (Trustee Held Funds)*Keene Public Library Trustees***For Fiscal Year 2026-2027**

Income	FY25-26	FY26-27
Cash from Checking Account	\$20,050.00	\$68,493.39
Cash from the Restricted Account	\$25,000.00	\$55,000.00
NHCF Endowment Distribution for Outreach	\$6,213.00	\$7,056.61
Unanticipated Income (donations, bequests, etc...)	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
 *Anticipated Donations by the Friends of the Library	 \$60,000.00	 \$60,000.00 *
Total Income:	\$116,263.00	\$195,550.00
Expenses		
Trustee Initiated expenses:		
Buildings and Grounds Committee	\$26,000.00	\$10,000.00
Fine Arts Committee	\$4,500.00	\$6,000.00
NH Library Trustee Association	\$800.00	\$800.00
Strategic Planning Reserve	\$750.00	\$750.00
Maintenance Reserve (eg. furniture replacement)	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Trustee Projects:		
Lighting project	\$0.00	\$80,000.00 **
Other	\$5,000.00	\$25,000.00
Library Initiated expenses:		
Books and Equipment	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Director's Discretionary Account	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Staff Development and Conferences	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Outreach and Programming	\$6,213.00	\$0.00
 *Anticipated Expenses by the Friends on behalf of the Librar	 \$60,000.00	 \$60,000.00 *
Total Expenses:	\$116,263.00	\$195,550.00

Notes:

*The list of donations and services made by the Friends of the KPL to the Library will be itemized every month for acceptance by the Trustees. The total value of the anticipated donations will be up to \$60,000.00.

**Proposed change resulting from project cost increases presented by architect & City at May Board meeting.
Grant income and expenses will be tracked separately.

Finance Committee
Keene Public Library Trustees Annual Report,
June 30 2025–June 30 2026

August 4, 2026

The beginning of the new fiscal year brought news of the impending retirement of stalwart Chair, Judy Putnam, in December, as well as the departure of member Justin Somma, who will lend his diligence to the Building and Grounds and Fine Arts committees. Good luck to both! Sam Temple and Hollie Seiler have joined the committee along with Jane Pitts, Treasurer. Holly will take the minutes and Sam will act as new Chair.

Every third Thursday of the month the Board attended to both regular business and reviewed new projects. Most meeting time was spent on monthly tasks: the acceptance of donations, large and small; the tracking of expenses such as P-Card and book purchases as well as Trustee-supported projects like outreach; and quarterly reviews of financials supplied by Jane.

The annual review of the Trustee portfolio with Edward Jones took place in January, when the committee reviewed the state of both investment and restricted accounts. After meeting with advisor Alan Stroshine, the committee recommended to Board a slight recalibration of investment account by reducing large capital equities and increasing international holdings given market trends. It also recommended that we reinvest capital gains and dividends into the accounts, a practice which had been suspended during the Heberton renovation to provide more liquidity in cash account. It was also noted at the time that, given the expected large distribution of the Harry Lichman Trust in early 2027, we schedule another meeting with Edward Jones sometime in the fall to discuss best options for investment.

The proposed lighting project and associated work with city and architects occupied much of the new business for 2026. Building and Grounds brought the first draft of project to the Board's attention in September, where it recommended funding an initial study by drawing down several restricted funds, including the Green and Thayer accounts. In March, Michael Petrovick presented the feasibility study and proposed lighting upgrades. Based upon an initial estimate of \$150,000, the City agreed to include lighting project in the 2027 CIP as long as Board agreed to contribute half of total expense. Cost estimates almost doubled once a more precise price sheet was generated, leaving the Board with a significantly higher contribution than first expected. By the end of the fiscal year, the Finance committee had a rough sense of the financial outlay required. The City would cap their contribution at \$87,500 for project and \$25,000 for design. The Friends agreed to contribute up to \$50,000. This would leave roughly a \$100,000 tab for Trustees if all three phases of project are completed, notwithstanding future cost increases once the bidding process began. The question of whether to split up the project into stages and how that would be presented to the City remained open and will be revisited in 2026/2027, as will the best approach for funding the project through a combination of sale of unrestricted assets and cash accounts.

In addition to the lighting project, the Finance Committee also recommended to Board they move forward with Marti Fiske's request for an overhaul of website. Jane Pitts added a placeholder expense of \$25,000 to budget to account for this.

As the Finance Committee looks ahead to the new fiscal year and its attendant challenges, it also reflects on the legacy of Judy Putnam and all she has done to anchor this institution in the community. Thank you Judy, you will be missed!

Sam Temple, Finance Committee Chair

Overview of Library Finances for Next Fiscal Year: FY2027

City of Keene Annual Operating Budget – Library

The Operating Budget provides taxpayer funds for personnel and operating expenses as approved by the City Council. The budget for FY2027 is \$1,801,126. The Collections budget is \$155,000. Collections include materials for all audiences in reference, print, AV, Library of Things, streaming and digital formats.

City Held Trust Funds

The City Held Trust Funds are spent in accordance with the directive of each trust. The base budget approved for FY2026 is \$3,500.

City of Keene Annual Operating Budget – Library Facilities Maintenance

Facility issues are reviewed by the Building and Grounds Committee consisting of City Staff, Trustees and Friends. Utilities, repairs, maintenance, janitorial and mechanical staffing at the Library, and other related items are managed and budgeted under the Facilities Department. The Library Facilities Maintenance budget approved by the City Council for FY2027 is \$775,178.

City of Keene Annual Operating Budget- Information Technology

The “IT Cloud Applications” fund in the Information Technology Department budget covers the large cost digital subscriptions costs vital for each department. The Library’s Cloud line primarily covers the cost of the Integrated Library System (Circulation, Catalog and Technical Services) at \$31,759.

City of Keene Capital Improvements Projects Budget (CIP)

The CIP for FY27 includes funds to improve lighting in the public areas of main floor and the 2nd floor of the 1859 constructed section. Tax support for the project is budgeted for \$112,500. Additional funding will be provided by the Trustees and Friends of the Library.

Heberton Hall Cost Center

The Library Campus Use Agreement was created and approved by the Trustees of the Keene Public Library, the Friends of the Keene Public Library and the City of Keene’s City Council. The agreement designates that “Any revenue which is derived from the use of the Library Annex and the connector forming the NMTC Project shall be deposited into a City cost center created for this purpose, and expended from time to time upon mutual agreement of the Parties and through such process as may be required by the City Finance department, to defray costs and expenses related to Library Campus operations, including but not limited to, furniture, fixtures, equipment, library materials, staffing, repair and maintenance.” The balance at end of fiscal year, including FY26 rents from the suite, was \$152,024.25.

Friends of the Keene Public Library

The Friends of the Library supplement the Library budget with monies gains from fundraising, investments and donations. The Friends financial year begins in January and ends in December. For FY27, the Friends total support is expected to be \$118,300. The Friends pledged \$56,750 in support of services during calendar year 2026. Service support includes funds paid directly to the Library for programs, Makerspace staff and supplies, volunteer and staff recognition, equipment, repairs, and maintenance of equipment. The Friends also fund the museum pass programs at annual cost of approximately \$11,550, through separate monies paid directly to the museums and the vendor providing the pass management software. In addition, the Friends of pledged up to \$50,000 to assist in the lighting improvement project in FY27.

KPL Trustee Budget

The Trustee budget comes from anticipated income from investments and donations, including the donations from Friends of the Library. The Trustees budget supplements collections, equipment, furniture, staff training and maintenance of the grounds and building. It also pays for strategic planning, Trustee training and membership of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association. The budget for FY2027 is \$135,550 from sources other than the Friends of the Library. This reflects additional spending to support planned improvements for lighting and the website.

KPL Trustee Held Funds

The total value of the investments held by the Trustees at Edward Jones as of June 30, 2026, is \$776,713.15 versus last year's value of \$699,587.81.

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF).

The NHCF holds a fund for the benefit of the Keene Public Library. The "Keene Public Library Endowment Fund" supports the library's Outreach programs, generally at about \$6,000 each year. The balance as of June 30, 2026, was \$207,415.79. Last year's value as of June 30, 2025, was \$174,322.41.

Annual Report of the Buildings and Grounds Committee August 2026

Committee Members:

Assistant Library Director Susan Bloom, Don Caruso, Library Director Marti Fiske, Jennifer Friedman, Paul Henkel, Kathleen Packard, Sally Rinehart, Justin Somma, Deputy City Manager Andy Bohannon and Manager of Facilities Shane Baker. Manager of Facilities Scott Martin was a member until his retirement mid-year.

Lighting

Lighting remains inadequate for reading book titles in portions of the stacks area. Shelving was repositioned to improve sightlines and supervision after the current lighting system was installed in 1999. Improved lighting is also needed in the Miller/Vincent Room, Marti's office, and the reading rooms in the original building.

Planning for enhanced lighting and improved energy efficiency has been a major focus this year. The Library Board approved \$8,500 for a feasibility study, which provided the technical information and cost estimates needed for future planning. Cost estimates were prepared by architect Michael Petrovick. Cost sharing with the Trustees and the Friends was arranged. A CIP was prepared with assistance by Andrew Bohannon, and it was approved by City Council. The project is expected to be put out for bid during the summer of 2026.

Landscaping

City Facilities staff continue to maintain the grounds to a high standard. Under their direction, Sara Mustin Stockwell cares for the Winter Street side, including the book-drop garden, the east-side garden, and the rain garden near West Street, keeping these areas attractive throughout the year.

Based on the contract with Bartlett Tree Experts, and cost sharing with the City, we anticipate landscaping expenses of approximately \$1,785 for fall soil treatments. These treatments will address soil deficiencies identified through soil testing conducted this spring.

Another landscaping expense is treatment of the European copper beech located in the northeast corner of the property. Treatment is needed to protect the tree from serious effects of Beech Leaf disease. At our June meeting we authorized spending up to \$1,600 on treatment this summer.

Maintenance

The floor in Heberton Hall was refinished this year. Stage-edge markings were restored using tape. During the next refinishing cycle, permanent markings in red, yellow, or another highly visible color may be installed.

Uneven concrete near the bench on the Winter Street side was corrected by grinding down the high points.

In the courtyard north of the Putnam Atrium, much of the mortar between the granite trim blocks has deteriorated. Shane Baker is developing a plan to address this issue.

Replacement of eight upstairs windows in the Youth area was completed. Because the windows have arched tops, custom replacements were required.

The exterior casing of the small office window east of Marti's office has experienced significant weathering, including deterioration at the sill. Andy Bohannon indicated that repairs to the window casing are planned.

Submitted by

Paul Henkel, Chair

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Policy Committee Annual Report 2025-2026

New Policies:

(None)

Updated Policies/By-Laws:

Emergency Operations Policy, August 2025

Use of the Youth and Teen Rooms and Services Policy, September 2025

Patron Confidentiality Policy, November 2025

Board of Trustees Bylaws, January & June 2026

The Policy Committee began the year in August by updating the Emergency Operations Policy. When the policy was created in 2020, it focused primarily on addressing the needs of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The revision broadened the policy to include more common emergencies, such as inclement weather, while removing COVID-specific language. The revised policy was approved unanimously.

In September, the Committee updated the Use of the Youth and Teen Rooms and Services Policy. The revision renamed and replaced an outdated policy, expanding its scope beyond room use to include behavior expectations and clearly defines the intended age groups for youth and teen spaces, services, and programs. This revision addressed a recurring issue of adults attempting to participate in programs designed specifically for youth and teens. The updated policy clarifies that participants must fall within the designated age group. The revision was approved unanimously.

Over the following few months, the Committee revised the Patron Confidentiality Policy. Originally adopted in April 2024, the policy required updates to comply with House Bill 273, which took effect January 1, 2026. The new law now grants parents and legal guardians' access to their minor children's public library borrowing records. The revised policy outlines the procedures required to access a minor child's current checked out records. The update was approved unanimously.

Beginning in January, the Committee undertook a comprehensive review of the Board of Trustee Bylaws. The process began with a motion to remove the former KLAAC section of the Bylaws. This was approved unanimously. The Bylaws were also reformatted and incorporated with the Library's policies to improve public accessibility.

Over the remaining five months of the fiscal year, the Committee completed an extensive revision of the Trustee Bylaws. A comprehensive update had not been completed since its original adoption in 1984. The Committee conducted a line-by-line review, clarifying existing provisions, expanding sections where needed, and reorganizing the document to improve its structure and readability. The revised Bylaws were approved unanimously by the Board.

The Policy Committee plans on reviewing the replacement fee schedule next year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Packard, Chair

**Fine Arts Committee
KPL Trustees
Annual Report 2025-2026**

In 2025-2026 the committee met quarterly for the first half of the fiscal year and monthly for the second half. Committee members were Judy Putnam (Trustee and Chair for 2025, Former Trustee 2026), Justin Somma (Current Trustee, joined in January, Chair for 2026), Jane Pitts (Current Trustee), Kathleen Kennedy Burke (former Trustee), Susan Bloom (KPL Staff), Amy Kraemer (KPL Staff).

Early in this fiscal year, the Committee discussed plans for a reception to celebrate the donation of the David Wiesner print to the Library by Ken Dassau. The reception was held in the Atrium, with refreshments and an art activity in late 2025.

Around this time the Committee also discussed purchasing art boards and other equipment to facilitate future events, and discussed reaching out to school groups and art groups regarding having KPL host those events.

In 2026 the group's meetings moved to a monthly cadence as the Committee zeroed in on the best method for increasing the venue's capacity for hosting art exhibits – the purchase and installation of a art hanging rail system in the Atrium, as well as potentially purchasing standing faux-wall panels and pillars to house additional art pieces.

In March, the Keene Middle School displayed students' artwork in an exhibit from March 5th to the 26th.

After that exhibition closed, the group toured the atrium to finalize plans for the purchase of the rail system, and at the April through June meetings, reviewed and finalized the offering with the vendor and city staff to confirm the exact specifications of the atrium project.

Justin Somma

Fine Arts Committee Chair

Annual Report of the Community Outreach Committee (COC)

Fiscal Year 2026

Members included Hollie Seiler (KPL trustee), Karthik Gowda (KPL trustee), and Amy Kraemer (KPL staff)

The Community Outreach Committee (COC) aims to assist the Keene Public Library (KPL) in connecting with its patrons and effectively communicating announcements, updates, and information about current and future events, programs, and services offered by KPL.

The committee currently comprises of two KPL Board members and a Library representative. In the year ahead, we hope to attract one or two additional KPL trustees to aid in our mission of fostering active community participation in library programs, events, and services.

With the indispensable assistance of Amy Kraemer, the COC was able to participate in programming and outreach opportunities for children and adults in our community. The committee is proud to report on a successful year of engagement through numerous events including, but not limited to: Summer Reading Celebration, Earth Fest, Trick or Treat at the Library, Youth Fest, Keene Pride, and International Observe the Moon.

The COC looks forward to supporting vibrant and inclusive community events in the year ahead.

Submitted by Hollie Seiler

Long-Range Planning Committee

The committee was inactive this year.

Friends of Keene Public Library

President's Annual Report 2025

Good evening, Members of the Friends of the Keene Public Library, Representatives from the Trustees and from Library staff, and fellow Board Members.

Since 1982 the Friends have fulfilled our goals of supporting the Keene Public Library and promoting literacy in the community. In 2025 we held two successful book sales with the help of volunteers, members, directors and trustees for a record \$33,185.

Part of the profit is due to our special books section headed by volunteer and former antiquarian book seller Frank Bequeart. There was also an Adult Fiction Pop-Up Sale on July 12th. Many thanks also to all those who volunteered to make our sales financially profitable and fun.

The Friends have been very fortunate to have extraordinary folks who have donated so many books. This year the volunteers who sort books also pick up books from donors who are unable to bring them to our bin. Many thanks to Everett Hosking, Charles Ferrando, and Kurt Hult who not only have volunteered their vehicles to pick up the books; they also have packed the books into boxes to bring back to the sorting room. Finally, we continue to have our leftover books picked up by Bay State Book Company that sends them out to community churches, schools and even prisons all over the world.

Library Support:

Our contribution to the library's collection development was used towards digital learning and youth and adult programming resources. Big ticket items : 2 Makerspace internships (\$18,000), and two computer literacy stations for 2 to 8 year olds.

The Museum Pass Program with now 23 museums, offers Library patrons a reduced price for tickets; this year our cost was \$11,980 with the most popular being Montshire Museum of Science and Magic Wings as number two. Two museums were added: the New England Aquarium and Fort #4 in Charlestown.

Many, many thanks to Marilyn Gemmell for managing this effort.

The Treasurer's Annual Report prepared by Marilyn Gemmell and the Heberton Funds Annual Report prepared by Sally Rinehart will give more details about the funding from the Friends. Thank you both for your diligence.

Community Outreach

The Friends continue our partnership with the Swamp Bats Baseball organization in Keene to sponsor the elementary literacy program “Mr. Gemmell’s Reading with Ribby” reaching 2414 children in 38 schools in Keene and surrounding area schools.

Director Claire Coey keeps track of the book sale volunteers, and reported that the Friends in 2025 had 124 volunteers. This included Marion Francois, Mike Cheltowski, and 10 Monadnock Regional High School Interact students with members of the Keene Rotary Club. They bring all the boxes of books up from our sorting room to Heberton Hall and Cohen Hall, and at the end of sale pack all the unsold books into boxes for pickup by the Bay State Book Company..

The Friends continue to support the Volunteer Fair 2025 that encourages folks to learn about opportunities for helping that non-profit organizations offer in our community. In 2025 several new volunteers joined the Friends.

Finally, the Friends have partnered with the Savings Bank of Walpole to provide books for their free library book cart at the Marlboro Street and Court Street branches. We fill 2 boxes of children and adult books four to six times/year.

Membership & Board Contributions:

In 2025 the Membership and Development Committee of Claire and Jack Coey continued to published three very interesting newsletters. They added a feature to showcase our volunteers who were interviewed by Jack Coey. There is a donation leaf in the newsletter that encourages our members to continue to support the Friends. Further, Jack designed vest for our volunteers at the Book Sale to help customers easily identify staff at the sale. Jack has resigned from the Board but still volunteers to sort books and to help at the book sales. Thank you, Jack.

We thank former Finance Chair Paul Ledell who retired from his position on the Board, and now Director Sally Rinehart who stepped up to fill his shoes. Funding from the Keene Revo Casino in 2025 for the 10 days netted the Friends \$20,420. It was decided by the Board not to pursue further funding from the Casino.

Special thanks to Cindy Northrop who chairs the Marketing Committee for her efficiency in getting the word out about our sales. Carol Jeffery, formerly of Monadnock Radio Group continues to speak on our behalf on the WKBK Dan Mitchell Show to talk about our mission and our sales. Thank you, Carol Jeffery. Special thanks to Cindy Qu, my daughter-in-law, for her book sale designs for our banners and posters. Finally thanks to

volunteer Teresa Rodriguez who is working on our website. She now posts the dates of the Book Sales on the first page of the website.

In Appreciation

The Friends are grateful to the Library Board of Trustees, Library Director Marti Fiske and Assistant Director Susan Bloom, and all the library staff, for their continued support to our organization. I want to thank my wonderful directors for all their wisdom, ideas, hard work and assistance throughout this year.

Finally, it has been honor to serve as your President, and with your support I look forward to another successful year with the Friends.

Jan Manwaring President June 17, 2026

Goals for the coming year

1. Fill the vacancies on the Board including the search for President and Treasurer next year. Immediate need is a chair of the Membership and Development Committee
2. Strengthen Board Committees with each director participating in a committee. Let's not have committees of one person.
3. Empower the Book Sale Committee to be responsible for the activities associated with each book sale. The Book Sales have grown so much in 2025 that it needs a committee to cover all aspects of the event.

--Jan Manwaring, President, FKPL

Horatio Colony House Museum and Nature Preserve

The Horatio Colony Museum has been temporarily closed this year. The Horatio Colony Nature Preserve has continued to remain open under the management of Antioch University New England in collaboration with the Horatio Colony Trust. Graduate students work with an Antioch Project Manager to maintain trails, coordinate use, and develop educational programs with schools and the public.

Paul Henkel

**Nominating Committee
Keene Public Library
Board of Trustees
Officers for 2026-27**

President: William Stroup

Vice President: Justin Somma

Treasurer: Jane Pitts

Secretary: Hollie Selier

**Keene Public Library
Director's Report 2025-2026**

**TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY, THE 151ST ANNUAL
REPORT IS HEREWITH SUBMITTED:**

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the Keene Public Library continued to serve as a vital anchor of lifelong learning, digital equity, and community connection. This year's progress was made possible through the direct financial support of Keene's taxpayers, the immense generosity of our private partners, and the dedication of our staff and volunteers.

Fiscal Stewardship and Community Support

In the past fiscal year, the taxpayers of Keene supported the library with a total of \$2,608,063, which included crucial infrastructure support managed through the City's IT and Facilities Departments.

Public funding was augmented by non-tax income. The Friends of the Library and the Library Trustees continued their generous support which funds 100% of the library's programming and provides assistance for critical budget lines. The Friends of the Library provided \$68,303 to fund programs, equipment, building maintenance, Makerspace staff, and our Museum Pass program. The Library Trustees contributed \$29,814 to support staff continuing education, equipment, programs, and key administrative projects. With local grants (\$2,199) and fees (\$63,484), non-tax funding equaled \$163,800, 5.9% of the year's total budget.

Our professional staff was bolstered by a dedicated team of twenty volunteers. By contributing approximately thirty-eight hours of assistance each week, primarily at the Atrium service desk, they allowed staff to focus on essential library functions.

Professional Recognition

The Keene Public Library's community collaboration and innovation earned significant recognition this year:

- **Community Partner of the Year:** The Cheshire County Conservation District selected the library as the recipient of its inaugural Community Partner of the Year Award for 2026, with the formal presentation scheduled for October.
- **Regional Leadership:** Our staff shared their expertise with peer institutions, presenting workshops on how to build and maintain an "Outdoor Gear Library" collection at both the New Hampshire Library Association and the New England Library Association conferences. Following these presentations, the library was featured in *New Hampshire Magazine* for an article titled "Borrow More Than Books at Your Local Library."

Legislative Monitoring and Challenges

Library leadership devoted significant attention to tracking critical legislative and policy issues on both the state and national levels. Staff monitored eight proposed bills in the New Hampshire Legislature that carried potential impacts for library operations, intellectual freedom, or municipal personnel. On the federal level, an April court decision reinstated staff at the Institute of Museum and Library Services, securing the immediate future of this essential federal funding agency, though its long-term stability remains dependent on future federal budget allocations.

Expanded Programs and Outreach Partnerships

Meeting the diverse needs of our community has driven several new initiatives and deeper partnerships with regional non-profit organizations this past year:

Services for Seniors and Mobility-Impaired Residents

The library launched two new programs to provide service to Keene residents unable to access library services due to with physical disabilities. The new Homebound Library Services program provides delivery and pickup of books, media, and resources to those unable to visit the library due to illness, disability, or temporary mobility issues. Deliveries are made by a flexible weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly appointment. These visits are contactless or brief doorstep exchanges handled by trained volunteers. Additionally, the library established a partnership with the Covenant Living and American House senior communities for their staff to facilitate weekly and bi-weekly deliveries for their residents.

Strategic Community Partnerships

Over the past year the library actively worked to strengthen Keene's community connections through collaborations with cultural, educational, and civic organizations:

- **Cultural Collaborations:** We served as a community partner for *Emerald Isles* at The Colonial Theatre, delivering an opening address, coordinating themed book displays, showing of a documentary about students of Irish dance, and raffling event tickets. Later in the season, we introduced new custom display furniture in our lobby to showcase curated collections that complement talks given by area nonprofits. The first use of the display was for library programs presented by the Executive Directors of both the Colonial Theatre and the Peterborough Players.
- **Civic Engagement Grant Project:** The library secured a \$7,800 grant from the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority and New Hampshire Humanities. This funding will support a "Community Conversation" on August 22, followed by a collaborative community-building project before the end of November. To maximize outreach, we are partnering with the City's Human Rights Committee, Hannah Grimes, the YMCA, Monadnock Interfaith Project, and the Monadnock Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Board.
- **Youth Leadership:** The Library Director served as an Assistant Facilitator for the Mayor's Youth Council at Keene High School alongside Mayor Jay Kahn. Among their

projects, the Council successfully organized a Native American history event for local middle school students.

- **Celebrating History:** We partnered with the Historical Society of Cheshire County to host an interactive viewing of *Hamilton*, marking one of Keene's inaugural celebrations leading up to the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.
- **Keene Community Education:** We expanded our outreach to adult learners. In addition to our annual student visits, library staff visited the Keene Community Education classrooms to present directly to adult high school diploma students. To better serve our increasingly diverse population, staff used translation tools to produce library service brochures in Spanish, Ukrainian, Portuguese, Mandarin, Korean, Haitian Creole, and Burmese. The accuracy and cultural appropriateness of these translations were graciously reviewed and verified by adult English-language students during visits with their classes.

Facility and Capital Improvements

In partnership with the City's Facilities Department, two essential projects were implemented to preserve and upgrade our historic building:

- **Lighting Study & Capital Improvement Project:** Funded entirely by the Library Trustees, a comprehensive lighting study was conducted for the Adult Collection area and both floors of the original library mansion. The study identified suboptimal illumination, with several areas falling below modern safety standards. To minimize the impact on local taxpayers, both the Friends and the Trustees pledged matching funds, prompting the City Council to approve support for a comprehensive lighting upgrade within the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Improvement Project budget. A Request for Quotes is currently underway.
- **Youth Department Repairs:** Structural maintenance continued in our youth section, where windows and their frames affected by wood rot were replaced.

Special Initiatives and Operational Planning

Behind the scenes, staff worked on major projects to improve operations and ensure long-term emergency readiness:

- **Shared Catalog Planning:** Staff began collaborating with the Mason Library at Keene State College to research and select a new, unified software platform to support our shared catalog and borrowing services. A formal Request for Proposals will be published in the upcoming fiscal year.
- **Emergency Readiness:** In alignment with municipal directives, the library updated its Continuity of Operations Plans to ensure service continuity during unforeseen emergencies.

Personnel Changes

The following staff transitions occurred during the 2025–2026 fiscal year:

- **Welcomes:** Rylan Christen (Circulation Aide) and Carrie Perry (Circulation Aide).
- **Departures:** Catherine Lehane (Circulation Aide) and Tracy Flower (Circulation Aide).
We thank them for their dedicated service to our patrons.

Acknowledgments

The accomplishments of the past year are a direct reflection of the dedication, energy, and care of our staff, our volunteers, the Library Trustees, the Friends of the Library, our municipal colleagues, and the residents of the City of Keene. We are profoundly grateful for your continued advocacy, partnerships, and support.

Sincerely,

Marti Fiske, Director

2025-26 Annual Report for Youth Services and Community Services

Youth Services

The Youth Services Department continued to strengthen the Library's role as an essential resource for children, teens and families by providing an up-to-date collection and engaging programs that foster literacy, creativity and lifelong learning. This past year a major emphasis was put on collection management and evaluation, outreach and building stronger relationships with our local schools.

We have completed a thorough inventory of all areas of the youth and young adult collections. Our non-fiction section has been updated with the latest and most accurate information in all areas, with a special emphasis on New Hampshire history and science. A commitment by our staff to developing their own professional skills while staying up to date on new trends, authors and film adaptations has ensured that we have kept up with patron interests and needs.

Promoting reading year-round is a cornerstone of youth services. Visits from our adorable and hilarious shark and dinosaur are highly anticipated spring events at our local elementary schools and have gone a long way towards encouraging participation in the summer reading program. We have seen a steady increase in participants in not only our Summer Reading Challenge but also in our Winter Reading program, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program and several other targeted challenges. Integral support from the Friends of the Keene Public Library and local business partners has ensured that all of this is possible by providing incentives that encourage participation. This year we kicked off our Summer Park Story-times with Virgil the therapy dog, who also visits regularly to allow beginning and struggling readers to practice their reading skills. To make our special summer reading programs more accessible, we have changed our Terrific Tuesday events to Super Saturday events which has resulted in increased attendance. This year we featured puppet masters, magicians and wildlife wranglers.

Throughout the year, children and families participated in performances, story-times, author visits, crafts, STEM activities, book clubs and other special events providing various opportunities to develop literacy skills, build friendships, and explore new interests. Kim Wallach continues to enhance our story times with music and our partnership with Stonewall Farm has introduced children to adorable animals and farm culture. Annual events remain an important part of the department's work. Programs such as the Noon Year's Eve Celebration, Ladybug Early Literacy Festival and Teen Lock-Ins have become community traditions and continue to introduce new families to the Library's collections and services.

Community Engagement/Outreach

Building meaningful connections throughout the community remains a central focus overall. We have continued to expand the Library's presence beyond its walls by participating in community events, including Earth Day, YMCA Youth Fest, Keene Pride, International Festival, Juneteenth, Pollinator Palooza and the annual City of Keene community celebration otherwise known as Touch A Truck. We have connected Library collections with community events through curated book displays that complement

theatrical performances, historical commemorations, and cultural celebrations. These efforts have resulted in an increased awareness of Library services and granted us access to resources and new programming partnerships.

Working with organizations such as the Harris Center, Colonial Theatre, Cheshire Historical Society, and others, the Library offered programming that connected literature, history, science and the arts. Through our partnership with the Cheshire County Conservation District, we provided hundreds of seed packets and continued to grow our tool lending library. Antioch University and Community Garden Connections experts presented five gardening programs. These collaborations enriched the Library's offerings while highlighting the important role libraries play in supporting the cultural life of the community.

Adult Programming

Adult programming remained diverse and well attended throughout the year. Monthly craft programs, new technology focused programs, multiple book discussion groups, film programs, lectures, wellness programs, gardening workshops, and cultural presentations offered opportunities for learning and social connection. We continue to focus on promoting local authors through presentations and book displays. Many programs featured local experts, authors, artists, and educators, reinforcing the Library's role as a place where community knowledge and experiences are shared.

Makerspace

The Makerspace experienced continued growth and has become an increasingly valuable community resource. Expanded hours, experienced staff and increased programming designed to demystify the tools of the trade have encouraged creativity, built confidence and demonstrated the practical applications of emerging technologies. New members this year have exceeded the membership of past years combined.

All of these efforts combined serve to advance the Library's mission of being the place for community and learning. Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted.

Amy Kraemer

Head of Youth Services and Community Services

Systems Administration 2025/2026

This year, Keene Public Library expanded its digital offerings with two major database additions: GrantStation and Peterson's Test and Career Prep.

- **GrantStation:** Connects grantseekers with thousands of funding opportunities—from charitable foundations to federal and state agencies—and offers educational guides on proposal development and grant writing.
- **Peterson's Test and Career Prep:** Provides practice exams, college planning and scholarship tools, career preparation features (including an online resume builder), U.S. citizenship test prep, and English language learning resources.

Following the upgrade to Windows 11 workstations, the public computer desktops in the main room were redesigned to prominently display direct shortcuts to these digital resources, as well as Ancestry Library Edition, Transparent Language, UniversalClass, and Value Line. Shortcuts to local human service organizations offering financial, housing, and food assistance were also integrated into this redesign, offering computer users easier access to beneficial community services.

Public computer protection software was migrated to DeepFreeze to enhance system stability and ensure patron security. This reboot-to-restore platform prevents permanent changes to public workstations, guaranteeing that every computer automatically resets to a fresh, default configuration upon reboot.

The most significant enhancement of the year was the launch of our new public catalog, Vega Discover. Key highlights of this discovery layer include:

- **Unified Search Results:** Groups multiple editions and formats of the same title into a single search entry for effortless browsing.
- **Seamless Digital Integration:** Directly connects with OverDrive/Libby and hoopla, allowing patrons to borrow e-books and digital audiobooks and view checked-out materials directly within their library account portal.
- **Curated Showcases:** Features a customizable landing page highlighting targeted collections, including New Titles for adults and curated book displays for youth and young adults.

On a personal note, a rewarding aspect of serving as Library Systems Administrator is sitting down with community members to help them navigate tricky technical hurdles. Setting up a new device or recovering locked accounts—often due to something as simple as a changed phone number—can be a daunting process. While success isn't guaranteed, I always strive to find an acceptable solution. Over the past year, I provided direct, one-on-one support to over a dozen patrons, giving every issue my best effort to help them regain

access to their digital lives. The true value of this service is best articulated by one appreciative patron, who wrote to me after our appointment:

"Many thanks for your patience and phone expertise as we wade through our new iPhone 17s – so much to learn! [My husband] is already working... to understand all of the new features. You were super!"

Submitted by Jay Fee, Library Systems Administrator

Reference Services 2025/ 2026

Reference Services help provide access to the library's digital and physical collections. Through interlibrary loan staff give our patrons national access to materials beyond our consortium with Keene State College. Our notary public service remains popular with our patrons and the public in the region. Reference staff continue to create displays, participate in adult programming, help with summer reading and provide proctoring services. In addition to quick technical help at the desk, several staff also provide tech appointments to sit down with patrons and give them in-depth help with their questions. Staff continue to help people locate services in the community to help meet their housing, mental health and food security needs. The library continues its participation in the IRS Tax Form Outlet Program. Reference staff strive to answer all questions that come our way. Below is a thank you letter from a satisfied patron.

"Katherine,

I wanted to send a quick note to thank you for all of your help. What may have seemed routine to you made a tremendous difference to me, and I truly appreciate the time, effort, and care you put into assisting me. The resources you found are ones I had not even thought of and may save me a trip to Connecticut (and that I91/I84 interchange in Hartford during weekday traffic!) as well as hours staring at microfilm/microfiche.

Libraries are one of our greatest community treasures, and I don't think they always get the recognition they deserve. They are so much more than buildings full of books! They are where people can learn, explore, research, connect, and find help when they need it. The resources libraries provide are incredible, but what really makes them special are the people who work in them.

Libraries have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. My mother worked in the children's department of our local library for 38 years, and I practically grew up there. As a child, I learned firsthand just how much libraries have to offer and how knowledgeable and helpful librarians can be. Because of that, I've always had a deep appreciation for the work you do.

Your assistance reminded me of everything I've always loved about libraries and librarians. It also reminded me that I haven't visited the Keene library nearly often enough, something I intend to change. Sometimes it takes a positive experience like this to remember just how valuable our local libraries are and how fortunate we are to have them.

Thank you not only for helping me, but for the work you do every day to help so many others. It is appreciated more than you may realize."

Submitted John Johnson

Collection Development/Tech Services

The closure of Baker and Taylor threw a wrench into our workflows in Tech Services this year. Despite the changes and challenges—including having to make MARC records from scratch and cover all new books for a time—we continued to get new books into the hands of our patrons. Most of our selectors have moved to Ingram to purchase print materials and we now get our records directly from our own subscription to OCLC WorldShare rather than through the State Library. We are also now taking advantage of free processing offered by our audio-visual material vendor, MicroMarketing, which will save us both time and materials.

We completed a manual inventory of the large print collection earlier this year, using the opportunity to weed or replace items in disrepair. There was also a major weeding project undertaken in the non-fiction collection and this, along with routine weeding of the other collections, resulted in 41 boxes of books being sent to Better World Books this last fiscal year. Additionally, we have continued to grow our World Languages Collection, adding materials in Swedish and Burmese and refreshing our resources for those studying for U.S. citizenship.

Submitted by Jenna Henderson, Collection Development Librarian.

Book Displays

The library maintains a number of book displays throughout the building, typically rotating on a monthly basis. Displays are intended to provide at-a-glance readers' advisory, highlight diversity in the collection, and encourage circulation of materials.

Staff from youth, teen, adult, and circulation services work to create and maintain these displays throughout the year. In the youth department, displays are located throughout the collection. Some have been created to make popular series more visible, easing access for busy families. Others support programming and local events, sparking curiosity and deepening learning beyond the program itself. Adult displays are now seeking to do the same, supported by the addition of a new display case in the circulation lobby. In June, the library hosted staff from the Peterborough Players and the Colonial Theatre for a pair of programs, and the new display shelf boasted a display featuring plays, books on entertainment, and related fiction novels.



The library also creates displays that celebrate identities and diversity. We hope that these displays not only show support for all members of the community, but also broaden horizons and foster understanding. One patron remarked on the Pride display in June, expressing her enjoyment of the color and creativity of the display. She also commented that she felt the display would have been meaningful to many of her students when she was a teacher, and how pleased she was to see it at the library. Library staff have also recently added a permanent staff picks display area in the circulation lobby. It has quickly become one of our most popular displays, requiring weekly restocking. It offers a mutually rewarding experience, as staff enjoy sharing their favorites and patrons are afforded insight into staff reading habits. Patrons are encouraged to share their favorites with colorful bookmarks found at service desks.

From read-a-likes to programming, identities to seasonal themes, book displays support the library mission of supporting life-long learning and look good doing it. Displays offer engaging and dynamic ways to promote the collection in ways that are easily accessible to patrons. Hundreds of books circulate each year from displays and provide a vital avenue for passive recommendations and patron engagement.

Submitted by Katelyn McStravick, Community Relations Specialist

Meeting Rooms

The meeting rooms and event spaces at the library provide opportunities for the community to meet, learn, and celebrate together. Many groups use library spaces for open, public programming that enrich the community. Roughly 220 public meetings were held at the library between July 2025 and June 2026 with nearly 2,600 attendees. A wide variety of groups use library spaces for public education, including organizations centered on language learning, film screenings, hobbyists, civic engagement, environmental education, concerts, event planning, and political groups. Some notable public events held



in the library event halls this year were a performance from the Keene Middle School jazz band, a film screening from the Historical Society of Cheshire County, and a concert put on by the Monadnock Interfaith project. These events allow for easier access to public programming from local organizations and strengthen community resources.

Keene Public Library also continues to be a desirable venue for private events, offering everyone from local organizations to private citizens a space to host larger groups. In the last year library event spaces have been host to roughly 120 private events with approximately 1,900 attendees. Events include bridal showers, writers'

workshops, real estate closings, family reunions, and conferences. A particularly special event was a small wedding held in December in Cohen Hall. 2025 also saw the return of the vocal conference Sweet Adeline's, local film festival MONIFF, and Radically Rural. These large events are a draw for visitors to Keene and boost tourism downtown.

The library also serves as a venue for many city and state government meetings. The City of Keene hosted 29 meetings at the library, and state organizations held 9. The event halls provide ample space and easy access for hearings on community development projects, public hearings, and town hall meetings.

By far, meeting rooms are most used for collaboration between patrons. Anyone with a library card may use a room for up to 2 hours to work, play, or discuss with others. In the last year, KPL recorded 702 collaborative uses of our meeting rooms by just over 1,700 patrons. This was enhanced by the addition of a private study room, which is available for reservation regardless of membership. The private study room accounted for 219 of the 702 collaboration reservations in this fiscal year, clearly illustrating the need for this resource.

Heberton Hall underwent a brief closure in May 2026 in order to refinish the hall's hardwood floors. The new coating prevents damage and increases the longevity of the flooring, with the added benefit of increasing shine and reducing scuffs. Facilities also took the opportunity to replace worn wheels on the tables from the halls, which has increased safety and reduced risk of damage to the fresh floors.



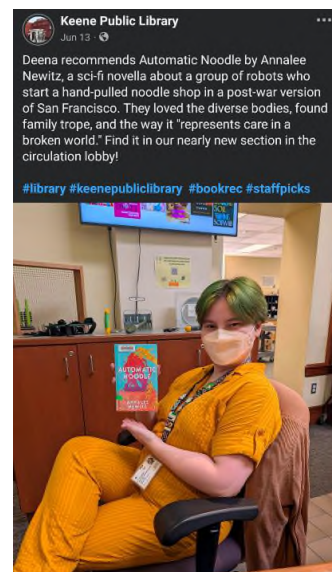
Submitted by Katelyn McStravick, Community Relations Specialist

Social Media

Social media platforms are one of the primary ways for modern libraries to share information and promote events quickly to a large number of people. It also allows patrons and strangers alike to feel more connected to the library and its staff. KPL uses its platform not only for promotional items, but also for informational and humorous content that deepens our sense of community.

Keene Public Library's platform has continued to grow in the last year. Meta's insights feature reports that the interactions and engagement from followers have increased by 81.6% on Facebook and 100% on Instagram in comparison to the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The library accounts now have 5,748 follows on Facebook and 1,729 on Instagram.

The focus this year has been on using real images and videos from around the library creatively to promote on-going displays, new titles, and upcoming programs. Staff have enjoyed making more reels this year, which have received positive feedback from patrons and followers. Reels allow our staff to be personable and funny, while the format helps all our content get more attention from the algorithm. It was a particular pleasure to collaborate with the Mason Library at Keene State College to highlight our partnership through video. Some of our most popular content included a call for an open position, the Sunday \$5/bag day of the book sale, an April Fools prank where books were organized by color, and a staff book recommendation of *Automatic Noodle* by Annalee Newitz.



Positive comments from followers include:

"Our library is one of the best things about Keene and the only thing that I don't mind my taxes paying for"

"Our library is the best!"

"Whomever is doing your social media is doing a wonderful job."

Sharing videos, photos, and events across social media not only helps to promote materials and programs but establishes the library as an active and fun place to be. Our social platform allows us to reach potential patrons and neighbors and invite them to join us in a laugh, learn about a new resource, or add a book to their to-read list. It also allows the library to voice appreciation for speakers and visitors who make programs special.

Submitted by Katelyn McStravick, Community Relations Specialist

Keene Public Library Volunteers

Every day, our volunteers help make the Keene Public Library a welcoming place for everyone who walks through our doors. Their friendly greetings, willingness to help, and commitment to serving the community create an atmosphere where patrons feel comfortable, supported, and connected. Over the past year, 20 dedicated volunteers contributed approximately 38 hours of service each week. Most staffed the Atrium service desk, welcoming visitors and answering questions, while others supported programs and services in our youth and teen areas. Their generosity of time and talent strengthens the library's ability to serve the community and enhances the experience for both patrons and staff. This year, we would like to recognize two volunteers who exemplify the dedication, kindness, and dependability shared by our entire volunteer team.

Volunteer Spotlight: Christine Mousseau and Carol Jeffrey

If you visit the Atrium on a Wednesday, chances are you'll be greeted by Christine and Carol at the service desk. Together, they ensure the desk is staffed from noon until 6:00 p.m., creating a welcoming presence for everyone who visits. Christine and Carol have been dedicated Atrium volunteers since the space opened in 2021. Their commitment goes far beyond simply covering a shift. When one is unavailable, the other is quick to reach out and offer to fill in, ensuring the library and its visitors are always supported. We are deeply grateful for their reliability, generosity, and the kindness they bring to the Atrium each week.

In Memoriam

This year, we remember and honor longtime volunteer **Jane Cunningham**, whose dedication and generosity touched the lives of countless patrons and staff. Her years of service reflected a deep commitment to the Keene Public Library and our community. We are grateful for the time she shared with us and will remember her with appreciation and fondness.

We are incredibly grateful for these volunteers who share their time and talent with the Keene Public Library.

Alton Downs
Ann Hefferon
Beth Healey
Carrie Perry
Carol Jeffrey
Catherine Behrens
Charles Ferrando

Christina Dretzin
Christine Mousseau
Debra Whitney
Diane Bogdan
Electra Cummings
Elizabeth Neuman
Kathleen K Burke

Lenore Hervey
Liz Sayre
Louise Zerba
Pat Barber
Stephanie Yarbrough
Susan Matthews

Submitted by Susan Bloom, Assistant Director

Fiscal Year 25/26 Basic Statistics

General Statistics

Library Visits	124,146
Reference Transactions	9,594
Interlibrary Loans KPL Patron Requests	1,678
Interlibrary Loans Other Library Requests	2,838
Scheduled Technology Appointments	34
Public Computer Usage (Sessions)	10092
Laptop Usage (Sessions)	82
Website Statistics (Pages Viewed)	No Longer Reported
Notary Public Transactions	619

Registered Users

Adult Resident Cards	10,100
Adult Non-Resident Cards	1,292
Youth Resident Cards	2,496
Youth Non-Resident Cards	755
Business/Organizations	92
KPL Outreach	9
Staff & Other Libraries	432
Cheshire County Special Borrowers	33
Temporary Residents	75
	15,284

Meeting Room Usage

	Events	Participants
City Staff (Other than Library Personnel)	29	809
Library Staff, Trustees and Friends	79	545
Outside Groups and Organizations		
Private Group Events	118	1,909
Public Free Meetings	227	2,583
Collaboration Room Occupants	702	1,739

Door Count

	FY25	FY26	% Change
Main Entrance	88,919	92,863	4%
Atrium North	6,225	7,795	25%
Atrium South	9,250	11,983	30%
Heberton Hall	12,317	11,505	-7%
Total	116,711	124,146	6%

FY 25/26 Electronic Resources Usage

Database	Statistics	Measure
Ancestry	1,172	Searches
	1,440	Documents used
EBSCO ebooks	13	eBook accesses
Grant Station	155	Logins
hoopla	4,698	Circulation
	303	New Patrons
	527	Unique Borrowers
Kanopy	23,259	Visitor Sessions
	4,618	Videos Played
Niche Academy (Makerspace Tutorials)	4,608	Views
Novelist Plus (includes K-8)	642	Searches
	1,055	Item Investigations
OverDrive	32,652	Audiobooks
	14,089	eBooks
	10,659	Magazines
	8,742	Advantage Only
Peterson's Test & Career	55	Sessions
	36	Card Click Count
Princh (Remote Printing)	917	Color Pages
	12,399	Black and White Pages
Transparent Language	711	Sessions
	1,026	Circulations
	77	Unique Users
	51	User Registrations
TumbleBooks	592	Tumblebooks Views
Universal Class	14	New Registrations
	24	New Courses Started
	449	Videos Watched
	107	Login Sessions
	716	Lessons Viewed
	667	Student Submissions
Value Line	2,706	Logins
	38,090	Searches
	19,918	Downloads

Fiscal Year 25/26 Acquisition and Holding Statistics

Format	Age	Items Added	Items Withdrawn	Current Holdings
Print Materials	Adult	2,536	3,616	55,388
	Youth	1,602	1593	42,755
	Young Adult	651	362	7,507
		4,789	5,571	105,650
Books on CD	Adult	41	161	2,204
	Youth	0	1	310
	Young Adult	0	0	6
Music on CD	Adult	14	0	1,040
	Youth	2	0	285
		57	162	3,845
DVD	Adult	158	85	7,332
	Youth	31	30	2,391
	Young Adult	8	2	1,215
		197	117	10,938
Playaways/Launchpads	N/A	61	27	1,171
Video Games	N/A	21	2	368
Mobile Hotspots	N/A	0	2	5
Garden Tools	N/A	2	0	80
Outdoor Gear		1	0	90
Library of Things		24	2	74
Museum Passes	N/A	2	1	35
Other	N/A	26	121	251
Periodicals (Issues)	N/A	1,219	792	4,635
		1,356	972	6,709
		6,399	6,822	127,142

Fiscal Year 25/26 Library Program Statistics

On-Site Programs	# of Events	Attendance
Children's Programs Age 0 - 5 ***	65	2,055
Children's Programs Age 6 - 11	94	1,634
Young Adult Programs	103	665
Adult Programs	325	4,108
Other Programs (Virtual)	12	615
	599	9,077

Offsite Library Programs	# of Events	Attendance
Children's Program Age 0 - 5	5	154
Children's Program Age 6 - 11	6	1,002
Young Adult Program	23	993
Adult Programs	3	120
All Ages	11	1,442
	48	3,711

*** 123 Play with Me was discontinued in FY25/FY26 reducing # of Events and Attendance

Fiscal Year 25/26 Comparative Circulation Statistics

	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26
Adult Fiction	35,110	34,123	33,397	32,307
Adult Non-Fiction	12,689	12,411	11,261	10,708
Total Adult Book	47,799	46,534	44,658	43,015
Juvenile and YA Fiction	36,830	38,914	40,987	40,399
Juvenile and YA Non-Fiction	5,941	5,524	5,439	5,215
Juvenile and YA Book	42,771	44,438	46,426	45,614
Total Book	90,570	90,972	91,084	88,629
Adult Magazines	1,677	1,418	1,299	1,198
Juvenile and YA Magazines	132	120	160	104
Total Magazines	1,809	1,538	1,459	1,302
Adult Books on CD	1,900	1,565	1,288	1,252
Juvenile and YA Books on CD & Playaway	1,556	1,378	1,444	1,355
Adult DVDs	14,077	12,295	10,464	8,994
Juvenile and YA DVDs, Videos and Playaway Views	9,826	9,276	6,680	5,705
Adult Music CDs	980	747	528	445
Juvenile and YA Music CDs	89	131	79	45
Total AV	28,428	25,392	20,483	17,796
Renewals	13,701	12,932	8,252	8,828
Museum Passes	1,206	974	575	619
Laptops	85	67	35	19
Interlibrary Loan	1,099	1,070	1,295	1,346
Juvenile and YA Gaming	1,225	1,282	977	1,077
Equipment	197	428	502	486
Total Other	17,513	16,753	11,636	12,375
Downloadable Audiobooks	27,129	27,494	31,492	34,785
Electronic Books	15,115	15,958	15,906	15,741
Downloadable Magazines	2,143	7,691	10,113	10,656
Streaming Videos	3,866	5,330	5,581	5,407
Total Downloadables	48,253	56,473	63,092	66,589
Grand Total Circulation	186,573	191,128	187,754	186,691

KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY CIRCULATION STATISTICS -- JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026													
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	TOTAL
Adult													
fiction	3110	3016	2822	2627	2282	2455	2765	2520	2689	2572	2596	2853	32307
nonfiction	1030	946	908	878	765	813	1046	811	963	854	805	889	10708
books on CD	164	145	104	116	65	89	117	74	92	111	74	101	1252
magazines	150	144	91	109	59	86	106	120	86	102	55	90	1198
music	49	17	37	34	48	39	22	28	44	44	49	34	445
DVDs	768	761	812	779	831	732	808	675	760	659	705	704	8994
Youth													
fiction	4137	3394	2890	2882	2664	2465	2939	2967	3038	2377	2364	3130	35247
nonfiction	419	471	482	480	380	270	431	411	455	371	426	383	4979
books on CD/playaway	201	115	114	81	79	101	96	107	124	106	86	128	1338
magazines	21	22	11	4	1	4	5	4	10	5	4	13	104
music	8	6	4	3	3	3	5	2	3	1	6	1	45
DVDs/launch/play-view	399	451	387	391	304	337	337	273	314	283	352	461	4289
gaming	92	75	71	65	60	63	85	86	85	60	97	87	926
Young Adult													
fiction	635	610	480	403	331	443	444	353	362	326	331	434	5152
nonfiction	17	18	23	18	11	18	31	25	16	25	16	18	236
CD/playaway	2	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	4	2	1	17
magazines	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DVDs	197	119	136	100	73	52	120	162	125	132	107	93	1416
gaming	23	11	11	7	13	9	19	14	13	5	12	14	151
electronic books	1362	1254	1183	1224	1257	1239	1436	1363	1328	1310	1402	1383	15741
downloadable audio b	2862	2955	2701	2862	2820	2829	3182	2709	3017	2861	3105	2882	34785
downloadable magazi	770	866	895	959	782	810	883	797	939	940	937	1078	10656
streaming videos	442	355	341	381	532	512	501	435	563	457	478	410	5407
laptops	6	1	0	0	0	5	1	1	1	3	1	0	19
equipment	69	43	61	64	27	28	26	25	22	20	51	50	486
interlibrary loan	102	96	108	109	71	66	105	103	170	154	122	140	1346
museum passes	79	73	25	37	42	36	38	62	47	62	68	50	619
renewals	869	851	954	857	708	611	605	727	813	712	544	577	8828
Total	17983	16817	15653	15470	14208	14116	16153	14854	16082	14556	14795	16004	186691