Dear Residents and Library Patrons,

The theme of National Library Week 2022 was “Connect with your Library” and our mission statement reflects our goal of being Lowell’s gateway to knowledge: A gateway to the world within our gateway city. Of course, we connect people to information on any topic they need and to physical resources such as printers, faxes, and photocopiers; we also are committed to connecting them to the larger world of ideas, to connecting them with each other in shared workshops, and to connecting them to themselves through art projects, craft kits, and museum passes.

As impressive as our physical collections are, we also offer a vast collection of e-books, audiobooks and movies for patrons to stream at home or anywhere through their computer, phones or TV devices such as Roku. Our most recent addition is Hoopla, which allows patrons to borrow items immediately. Items include comic books, e-books, movies, and more. We can even connect you to materials nationwide should they not be available within our extensive networks.

We host a large number of programs to support lifelong learning for people of every age, everything from Mother Goose on the Loose for pre-pre schoolers, to after school and summer help for kindergartners to young adults, to computer classes and book groups for adults and seniors. For convenience, programs are offered in-person, virtually, and hybrid. More than merely providing information and resources, we are also a community connector. We are an all-important third place where community members meet and gather. The meeting rooms are open to all nonprofits and unincorporated groups to meet free of charge.

We can’t wait to ‘connect with you’ when we bring the mobile library to your neighborhood! The mobile library emerged from the ideas that you, the community, provided during the outreach that informed the Pollard Memorial Library’s five-year strategic plan and it is one of our top five priorities for the Library. With federal grant money we are purchasing and outfitting a van to become the modern version of a “bookmobile” which will bring our resources, including programming/books/printing/internet/city information Internet to you….where you live. We will collaborate with our partners to schedule services to Lowell schools, recreation department events, festivals, Senior housing, and Lowell Community Health Center, to name a few.

As you turn these pages, we hope you share our pride in everything we achieved in this past fiscal year. We remain committed to providing the services that educate, empower and engage the entire Lowell community.
A WORD from OUR BOARDS

Dear Residents and Library Patrons,

Although the mission of each of our three supporting organizations, PML Board of Trustees, PML Foundation, and Friends of the PML may vary slightly, we are united in our collective goal: to support the Pollard Memorial Library. We are proud of what we have accomplished this year and remain grateful to our dedicated volunteers.

The Board of Trustees worked with the Library staff and Lowell residents to clarify the role the Library plays in the lives of our community, to assess Lowellians’ needs from the Library to create a plan to ensure that the Library continues to meet those needs. Trustees participated in the preparation of, and approved, a five-year Strategic Plan (2022-2026) which will align the library’s services and activities with the objectives we aspire to achieve, including the goals of creating a more welcoming environment, expanding outreach services, supporting a culture of teamwork, increasing engagement and advocacy, and growing library resources. We heard from you the need for Library services in your neighborhood and advocated that ARPA funding be used for a mobile library.

The PML Foundation raised money through its Annual Fall Appeal and its Author Night event, featuring Jamie Ford. These funds provide resources to the Library that are not covered by the traditional funding sources (the City of Lowell budget and State Aid). Equipment to enhance the technology in the Meeting Room for hybrid events, a Children’s Department display rack, and several programs, such as Lowell Reads, Kerouac at 100, and Sweet Pea Yoga, were furnished.

Friends of the PML provided funding for the Museum Pass program, which allows low cost or no cost access to the aquarium and over 20 other local museums, zoos and parks, as well as grab-and-go activity kits and family events, all with money raised through membership dues, book sales, and the ongoing sales from the book nook. The Friends also initiated several book giveaway programs including the Reading Resolution Program and in conjunction with the Summer Reading Program.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our Library staff. We hope you recognize the breadth of services, programs, materials, and information provided by these unsung heroes. Clearly today’s libraries are more than just books AND our Library has done a great job in adapting to challenges during and after the pandemic to ensure that everyone has access to information that they need.

If you are already involved with the Pollard Memorial Library, we hope you will renew your commitment and stay engaged as we work together to ensure that the Library remains a welcoming, accessible, and vital resource to all, as well as a trusted community partner. If not, we hope you will consider getting involved in building the future of this community resource — we can’t do it without you. Together we are creating a Library that serves all. The more we recognize and support each other, the more we all flourish.

Donna Richards  
Pollard Memorial Library Trustee, Chair

Belinda Juran  
Pollard Memorial Library Trustee, Chair

Lynn Ahlgren  
Friends of the Pollard Memorial Library, President
WHAT WE OFFER

When many people think of the Library, they focus on the physical items within the building. While these resources are exciting and valuable to our community, there is so much more that is available to the City of Lowell. Beyond the many books, CDs, DVDs, and more that are available for lending, the Library has a large number of e-resources that can be used for accessing e-books and e-audio books, magazines, movies, databases, newspapers and so much more! We also offer access to opportunities out in the community, including sharing information about what’s happening in the City, making available discounted museum passes, and sharing information to educate residents about voting and elections, community services, and other City departments.

One of our greatest assets is our Library staff. We provide assistance for patrons in a number of ways – assisting them to obtain the materials and information that they need, making suggestions for something new to try, teaching skills to utilize technology in the way that they need it most, as well as connecting them with opportunities for learning, understanding, or doing business. While COVID-19 changed the world for all of us, many people still need assistance with the variety of technology tools they need to use to interact with the world around them. We are grateful that our staff are able to provide the services needed by our community members to help them be successful.

While the Library serves as an asset for many Lowell residents, we are also a place that many people use that are from outside the community. These include college and university students, traveling staff members for a variety of agencies, artists and community activists, and even those who residences are not permanent. Regardless of whether a person has a Library card or not, anyone wishing to use the Library can enjoy many services, including viewing the news or reading the paper, accessing the city’s WiFi, using our computers, printers, copiers, and fax machine, reserving one of our study rooms, or hosting a public event in our community room.
## SERVICES PROVIDED IN FISCAL YEAR 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Attendance</td>
<td>85,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Reference Transactions (Questions Answered)</td>
<td>18,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Internet Users per Week</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Use of Meeting and Study Rooms</td>
<td>2,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Print Materials (Books, Periodicals, Newspapers, etc.)</td>
<td>159,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Non-Print Materials (Audio, Video, e-books, etc.)</td>
<td>133,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Circulation</td>
<td>147,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Received</td>
<td>17,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours Open per Year</td>
<td>4,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes Senior Center and 852 Hours After 5pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Participated in Live Programs</td>
<td>6,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Computer Sessions (Almost 40 People per Day)</td>
<td>601,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Languages of Materials Offered</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to our new Director, **STEVE ROBICHAUD**!

The staff and supporting boards of the Pollard Memorial Library are delighted to welcome the Library’s new Director, Steve Robichaud, as of October 2022.

Steve has an extensive background as a librarian, having worked for over 20 years in various roles in the academic libraries at Fitchburg State College, Clemson University and Southern New Hampshire University. He started his career doing the hands-on work of acquiring, cataloging and managing a library collection, and most recently Steve has supervised numerous functions at SNHU and has managed the library budget. Steve grew up in Central Massachusetts, in cities with many similarities to Lowell.

His background will bring a fresh perspective to our Library while allowing him to grow with and learn from its staff and patrons. Steve expressed his enthusiasm and commitment to PML and Lowell: “I’m very excited to be working with you all so we may provide the City of Lowell with a number of great services and supports to help the community thrive.”

Welcome to Lowell’s public library, Steve!
We look forward to welcoming new staff into the following positions: IT Support Specialist, Mobile Library Staff, Administrative Assistant, Part-time Custodians.
CHILDREN’S PROGRAMS

The pandemic caused many changes to how we delivered programming to our City’s children and their families. After having moved all our in-person programming outside (including Chalk with the Walk, Lego Club, Tie Dye, a Storywalk, and Pumpkin Decorating), during the 2022 fiscal year we were able to transition back to having these activities in the Meeting Room. We were so happy to see all of our friends for Mother Goose on the Loose, Family Storytime and so much more.

Yet we also learned the benefits of virtual programming: Our virtual Baby Yoga program, which became popular worldwide during the pandemic, continues only online to this day! Our Grab & Go crafts are once again being created in our Children’s Department and we are so excited to see the lovely creations of our youngest cardholders!

It was also great that we were able to offer both the Read & Bead Winter program and our Summer Reading button programs. We are so appreciative that we were to resume STEM programming again in person as well by offering the MC3D Python Coding Class.

One of our most exciting programs is our Book to Art group that combines reading a book and then completing an amazing craft to go with it. While we were excited to offer our patrons virtual programs for a variety of special events, including our Zoom gingerbread house decorating, being together to share experiences in person again and seeing the happy smiling faces of our kiddos is so wonderful. Thank you for all of the patrons, parents, guardians and grandparents who have participated in our exciting activities in the Children’s Department this past year!

“\text{I really like this Library. My kids and I are really enjoying the family time. The way they are doing it is very nice and I really like the books available.}” — Yeronis Kena, parent
YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

Our teens are some of our greatest library users and advocates. Many have participated in our formerly virtual and now hybrid programs, including Interactive Fiction and Dungeons & Dragons.

We’ve been able to share these programs with many new young people to get them involved in a library program. Fun activities like pumpkin decorating and more were a way to get creative in a fun, safe way.

Throughout the year, we offered a variety of writing workshops to help young people to find their voice and start to creatively write the stories that exist in their heads and hearts — ranging from the Creative Writing and Storytelling workshops with author Chris Boucher to the Fan Fiction Writing Workshops with local writers Samantha Chapman and Sara Marks.

We also loved the artistic creativity of our teens in decorating the windows around the building and within the Young Adult area!

“My middle schooler is loving this weekly group. We signed up for several social groups through local libraries and this is the only one we’ve chosen to continue and we look forward to every week.”

— Library Patron
The Reference and Community Planning Staff are committed to providing adults the learning opportunities, support, and information that they need to be successful, feel fulfilled, and obtain their goals. Each day, staff are here to help those who need access to information and learning materials. By being available to provide assistance, talk through issues, and provide direction to those who need us, we're making a difference each day.

Our Reference staff answered more than 18,500 questions last year about technology, materials, general assistance, and even local history, including providing access to city directories, city documents, newspapers, and much more to help answer questions about family history, details on buildings, and even general development in the city.

Programs for adults have transitioned from being completely virtual to a combination of hybrid (virtual and in-person) and programs that are only offered in the building. This flexibility helps us to best serve the needs of our patrons and to make our programs available beyond our walls when at all possible.

For the 2022 fiscal year, we selected To My Kin as our Lowell Reads selection and encouraged our patrons to share their stories with the community. We were again able to offer the ever popular Parker Lectures, now in a hybrid format for patrons. Local history talks focused on Lowell’s growth through various annexations, stories of Lowell politics and elections, and all the soldiers lost in Baltimore at the start of the Civil War. As part of the Kerouac Centennial, we celebrated Jack Kerouac’s life through our Night of 100 Poems, Talking Jack presentations, and a screening of the film, Kerouac’s Road.
A new opportunity for our patrons started in the spring with our Seed Library. Residents were able to pick up seeds for various fruits, vegetables, herbs and flowers to make their gardens a bit lovelier and fruitful this summer. We also offered a gardeners’ meet up to have like-minded individuals talk with local organizations who support gardening and sustainability.

During National Libraries Week, we held a special art tour of the library, supported by the Friends, and we hosted a mini-art show to encourage patrons of all ages to use art as a medium to celebrate Lowell and our Library. Another way to share your love of reading with other patrons is to contribute to the Awesome Box. It is a way for you to share anything you borrowed that you thought was amazing with other patrons and they will be added to our patron selections on the first floor.

Lastly, we were so excited to again offer author talks in person to hear about how they coped with the pandemic and to see their new works.

Our program with the Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts has grown in the past year. We’ve offered one-on-one sessions for tutors and students, tutor trainings, as well as Zoom conversation groups. Citizenship classes have continued to be offered between the Library and the Abisi Adult Education program, with all of the sessions happening via Zoom.

We are privileged to be able to offer programming and opportunities for residents to be exposed to new experiences, to have a friendly face to help them overcome a challenge, and also to learn something new. With the changes that occurred during the pandemic, many people realized that they needed assistance learning the rapidly changing technology required to do business over the past two years. We were, and continue to be, happy to assist patrons in whatever way possible to obtain the information, skills and materials they need to be successful.
HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

1844
Lowell’s first public library was established in rooms of the Old City Hall at 222 Merrimack Street with 3,500 volumes.

1872
Due to space restrictions, moved to the Hosford building on Merrimack Street.

1888
Trustees are established.

1891
A fire in the Hosford building occurs and the reading room is destroyed. Trustees rented rooms at Palmer and Middle Streets after the fire, and later on John Street.

1860
Renamed the City Library of Lowell.

1883
The annual subscription fee for the Library is ended – Free Reading Rooms established – one for men and one for women – Dewey Decimal System adopted.

1889
A commission was created to build the current City Hall as well as Memorial Hall, which would partially house the Lowell City Library.

1893
Library and Memorial Hall open in June.

1915
Fire in the Library – major damage occurred to Memorial Hall. City purchased large canvases that are now the centerpiece to that room and had them installed on the wall.
1967
Lowell City Library becomes part of the Eastern Regional Library System.

1982
The Merrimack Valley Library Consortium is established. Lowell is able to access materials for patrons from 36 other libraries in the area.

1981
Library renamed for late Mayor Samuel Pollard.

1983
The Friends of the Pollard Memorial Library are established.

1994
The Pollard Memorial Library Foundation is founded.

2002
Renovation of Memorial Hall, expanding patron access to most of the building.

2020-2022
The Library staff pivot in response to COVID-19 by creating at-home access to materials, curbside pickups of materials and print jobs, virtual programming and take and make options, and introducing new services including the Hoopla streaming service.
Library Trustees approved a five-year Strategic Plan with the goal to represent and serve all members of the community in a welcoming and inclusive environment while maintaining strong community partnerships and providing access to a wide variety of physical and digital materials. We recognized the importance of obtaining input from as wide a variety of constituents as possible, so we reached out in various ways (emails, paper surveys, electronic and paper newsletters, personal invitations) to a variety of organizations representing Lowell residents of diverse ethnicity, age and socioeconomic resources. The Strategic Plan outlines the areas of focus for the Library to help our residents — and our entire city — to learn, grow and thrive.

Library Staff/Trustees/Foundation are committed to ensuring the Strategic Plan goals are met. The groups partnered to form five teams (subcommittees) to tackle the objectives outlined in each of the goals. Incorporating the insights gathered from the community, we strive to align current library services and activities with the aspirations we hope to achieve, including the goals of a more Welcoming library, expanded Outreach services, a Culture of teamwork, increased Engagement and Advocacy, and overall growth of library resources.
**RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**LIBRARY**
- Must be open to all residents of Massachusetts
- Not charge for normal library services
- Open at least 63 hours/week, over six days, including some evenings
- Spend at least 12% of municipal appropriation on materials
- Submit reports to show compliance

**LIBRARY DIRECTOR**
- Must have MS Library Science and supervisory experience in libraries

**CITY**
- Must provide at least the Municipal Appropriation Requirement in direct city funding to the Library
- \( \text{MAR} = \text{the average of the greater of the MAR or actual appropriation for last three years, increased by 2.5%} \)

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**THANK YOU**

To the LIBRARY for always meeting its requirements and to the CITY for recognizing the importance of always meeting the MAR.

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**BENEFITS OF MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION**

**STATE AID**
- Lowell received a total of $225,306.75 for FY2021
- This is 13% of the Library’s budget and partially funds salaries and materials

**ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED GRANTS**
- Construction and planning grants, disaster assistance, LSTA and Cares Act, and preservation grants

**BOOK ACCESS**
- Commonwealth Catalog, e-books on demand through LEA (Library e-books and audiobooks), and summer reading promotions

**RECIPROCAL ACCESS** to other MA libraries
- Our patrons are able to borrow items from other Massachusetts libraries using their Lowell Library card

**STAFF TRAINING**
- Access to workshops and continuing education courses

**ACCESS TO DATABASES paid for by the State**
- Gale databases that cover Academic One, Biography, Career Transitions, Business, Health & Wellness, Kids Infobits, Literature resources, middle school topics
- Encyclopedia Britannica, Proquest and the Social Law Library
The Pollard Memorial Library has three boards to support the mission of the library (Trustees, Foundation, and Friends). The boards have different functions to ensure that objective is met.

Pollard Memorial Library Board of Trustees — The Library Board of Trustees has responsibility through the City of the general care, administration, and policy making for the library. The Board engages with the Library Director in an ongoing planning process, which assesses the needs of the library and the role of the library in the community and ensures that the library develops to meet those needs.

POLLARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
The Library Board of Trustees has responsibility through the City of the general care, administration, and policy making for the library. The Board engages with the Library Director in an ongoing planning process, which assesses the needs of the library and the role of the library in the community and ensures that the library develops to meet those needs.

PML TRUSTEE BOARD
Dory Lewis, Interim Director
Tom Golden, City Manager (ex officio President)
Donna Richards, Chair (Foundation Liaison)
Helen Littlefield, Secretary
Linda Kilbride, Secretary
Katy Aronoff
Suzanne Frechette

Syed Hasan
Muriel Parseghian
Judith Davidson, Associate
Amy Watson, Associate

POLLARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY FOUNDATION
In 1994, the Pollard Memorial Library Foundation was formed to secure funds which are used to provide financial assistance to supplement library programs, services, preservation projects, and purchase equipment not covered by other means (State Aid and City of Lowell). The goal is to support efforts that ensure a stronger library and a stronger community. The Foundation has two major fundraisers a year, a Fall Appeal and Author Night. The Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

PML FOUNDATION BOARD
Belinda Juran, Chair
Jamie O’Hearn, Vice Chair
Germaine Vigeant-Trudel, Treasurer
Jim Wilde, Clerk
Donna Richards (Trustee Liaison)
Angel Brunelle
Carol Duncan
Bob Gilman
Andrew Gilmore
Andrew Hostetler
Mary Johnson-Lally
Tricia Kennedy (Friends Liaison)
Rosemary Noon
Niki Tsongas

FRIENDS OF THE POLLARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY
The Friends of the Pollard Memorial Library is a volunteer group dedicated to supporting the library and its programs. Funding comes from membership dues, donations, book sales, bake sales, and other events, as well as from ongoing sales from the book nook. The museum pass program, family events, and grab and go activity kits are some examples of programming supported by the Friends. The Friends is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

FRIENDS OF THE POLLARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD
Lynn Ahlgren, President
Kerry Croven, Vice President
Helen Littlefield, Secretary (Trustee Liaison)
Tricia Kennedy (Foundation Liaison)
Judy Dunlap
Nancy Norton