

AURORA FREE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT
NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026
Submitted for Board of Trustees Meeting

HIGHLIGHTS AND NEWS

- Congratulations! Everyone met the Dec. 31st deadline for 2 Hours of Trustee Training and Sexual Harrassment Training. Thank you!
- The NYS Annual Report deadline has been changed from March 1 to April 1 since a new platform was needed since it had been using Baker and Taylor which closed. Boards need to approve the report by March 21st.
- Borrowed Giant Magnatiles from FLLS for about a month. Kids enjoyed creating amazing structures with them. We will borrow again in the future.
- Dave had the large meeting table refinished this month. Looks almost brand new!
- We had 400 people for Halloween 239 kids and 161 adults! It was a great evening with the foyer and main room decorated spooky. We had a lot of help decorating and volunteering that evening and all had a wonderful time!
- Received news that we will be granted our Friends of TCPL grant for a Cricut machine and materials and also for some additional buttonmaker supplies totaling \$1,032.80. Have purchased Cricut and mugs to try with it so far.

GRANT ACTIVITY NEWS

I am working on 3 Rosen Grants for 2026-27 which will be continuations of Storytime Train and Take it on the Road as well as one grant for 8 FLLS libraries to bring a Dinosaurs Rock! Program to the area this summer. Kathy and I are brainstorming programming ideas for the coming year to be included.

Rosen Take it on the Road and Beyond 2025-26 and FLLS Outreach Mini-Grant(for Food Pantry):

- Kathy continues to host Graphic Novel Book Club (age 10-13) and Dragon Explorers (for ages 6-9) meetings where she encourages reading and does a craft.
- The November Take and Make was celebrating Dinovember. Dinosaur activity books were handed out at the Food Pantry along with a flyer showcasing all of the Dinovember events happening at the library. We handed out activity books along with a Lego-type dinosaur and a keychain to color for in-house Take and Makes.
- In December we handed out Christmas craft books and a Pomander orange craft. We also gave some out to adults who enjoyed the activity.
- In December we gave out 65 bags with a variety of ornament crafts for families at the Food Pantry for a Take and Make.
- We are celebrating Dragon Appreciation Day (Jan. 16) with a Dragon Take and Make with a bunch of crafts, a 3-D dinosaur and a journal with writing prompts as well as design your own puzzle for National Puzzle Day (Jan. 29).

Rosen Grant Storytime Train 2025-26

- Presented Halloween, Thanksgiving and Holiday Storytimes in October, November and December to the 2 UPK classrooms at SCCS with Hazard Library.

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- Storytime is also happening weekly. There has been low attendance on the weeks that Aurora Preschool does not attend.

Statewide Community Regrant from Auburn Public Theater 2025:

- MOH sponsored Skaneateles String Quartet at the end of November. That concludes the funding, so I will file final report in the next month with AFL and MOH budget numbers.
- Received email that the next grant cycle's grant application is due Sunday, March 8, 2026 and we can ask for up to \$5000.

PROGRAMMING/PR

- We purchased a new projector and held our first movie night of the year with it. It was Classic Movie Night with a showing of *The Sound of Music* Sing-Along in early January. We had almost 40 people and everyone had a wonderful time. We plan to show *The Princess Bride*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Grease* in the coming months.
- Scheduled a virtual talk from the Pollock-Krasner House on *Nature Impressionist Inspiration Painting*. It will take place on January 20th at 4 pm by Zoom and will be followed by a workshop using techniques shown. The Aurora Art Club is helping promote and will meet at the library.
- Planning *Take Your Child to the Library Day* on Sat. February 7th.
- Dinovember activities took place in November including an in-house dinosaur scavenger hunt, and a Lego Building Week for the kids' Thanksgiving Week Break.
- *How to Train Your Dragon* Movie took place on November 8th with Dragon Activities before it. The books were also available to read before and after.
- Two adult art programs took place at the beginning of November. One was with the Aurora Art Club on November 6th where Cathy Mullarney presented on the artist Llort and then ran a workshop. A felting workshop took place on November 7th funded by past Helming grant funds. Most attendees made penguins, but attendees could make whatever they wanted.
- In December, Liz Snyder returned with a talk on Evergreens and a workshop where attendees made evergreen arrangements in jars.
- During Christmas in Aurora we held a graham cracker house decorating program and hosted Santa. We had a good turnout for decorating, but only a few for Santa.
- I donated a Library tote bag and Library print to Masons for Xmas in Aurora Silent Auction with beneficiary Camp Gregory.
- The Southern Cayuga Book Club met monthly and in early December chose their books and had a cookie exchange. 2026 Book Selections can be found here :
<https://aurorafreelibrary.org/southern-cayuga-book-club>
- The SCCS Literacy Committee met at the beginning of December to discuss activities for the year especially for February I Love to Read Month. Hazard and Aurora will give away books on Feb. 12 and there will be the annual Book and Breakfast on Feb. 26.
- Kathy's family and another patron (Melissa Hulme) made gingerbread-like decorations for the backroom.
- There were activities out for the Christmas Break, but we had very few people stop in. We also had Gnome on the Roam (hidden gnome) throughout December, but it was a slower month.
- Kathy and I are planning for the upcoming months' programming and the summer.
- Peachtown is coming weekly on Wednesday at 2 pm.

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- Teen D & D group continues to meet on most Monday evenings in jail room.
- Reviewed/ gathered info for November, December, and January Hub Newsletter and wrote article for Southern Cayuga Tribune.
- Updated website with webmaster and posted to FB and Instagram and used Mailchimp to alert patrons of latest events. Created PR for events and sent out press releases.

ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

- Used Collection Development money from FLLS to purchase some replacement copies of worn books and also purchased a large collection of Wonderbooks (audioplayers in books).
- Received a call that someone had fallen at night on front step to walkway. Working with Dave to improve lighting. He had installed solar lighting, but looking at other options. Sent patron an incident report form to fill out.
- Attended December Directors' Meeting where Sarah mentioned that the terminated IMLS (Institute of Museum & Library Services) grants have been restored! This is good news because staff at NYS Library are made possible through federal funding. Also learned there is a Candid Foundation Directory which the South Central Regional Library Council, through Empire State Library Network, is providing FLLS with access to and we can use as well.
- Attended January Directors' Meeting: 1. FLLS is developing their **Plan of Service**(state-mandated long range strategic plan 2026-2031). Due on October 1, 2026 and effective as of January 1,2027.
 - In-person focus groups will be held in each county in March, led by FLLS board members and staff. Virtual sessions in April for feedback on what FLLS should be focusing on over the next 5 years.
 - Part of this is also the Free and Direct Access Plan which will need to be completed in May, reviewed this summer, and **approved by all library boards by early September.**

2. In March, Board of Regents will be adopting the mandate that libraries must have certain policies and make them available on website.

- Considering who might be a good trustee to join the Board and reached out to some.
- Attended webinar: Adult Program Swap: Library Programs for People with Dementia in January.
- There is a new director at Tompkins County Public Library, Emerson DeMeester-Lane from Arizona will be starting Jan. 12 virtually and Jan. 26 in person.
- I met with a person interested in volunteering today.
- Attended FLLS Annual Meeting in October with Dave and Jo. Speaker spoke on *Building Community in Turbulent Times*.
- Great Give Back which libraries run for the month of October along with Hazard Library had no children's fruit cups which was what had been asked for but had other donations of food.

FINANCE/LEGAL COMPLIANCE/FUNDRAISING

- Received \$2000 for Collection Development from FLLS. Will use in 2026.
- I am gathering stats and other info for the NYS Annual Report.

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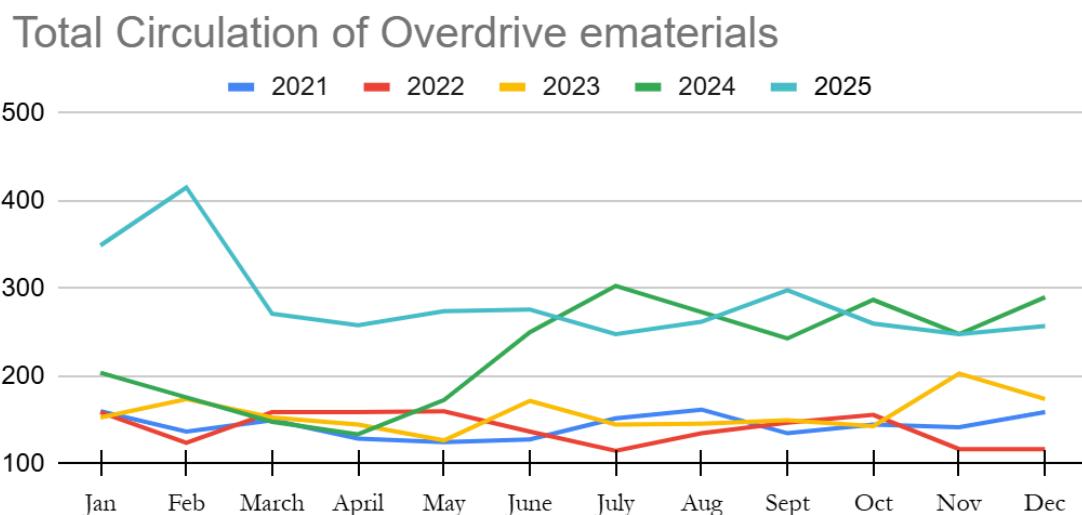
- Met with Dave and Lori to review the budget for this year and plan for next year. Met again with Lori to go over final numbers for 2025 and also with the bookkeeper Melissa to look at spending.
- Sent Sarah Glogowski estimate for next 5 years of NYS Construction Grants for \$180,000, after consulting Dave and Steve. This would range from updating electrical to possibly replacing wood floors in MOH, adding better ventilation and more.
- Supported Dave in getting out the Annual Appeal.
- In touch with Dave and Steve regarding Construction and other building projects.
- Continuing to have In-House Book 'Sale' by donation.

DOOR COUNT: *Daily door count (not including those who attended programs).

**** Does not have Tyburn productions in April door count. Has some but not all of rehearsal door counts for Peachtown and Hamlet in May/June.**

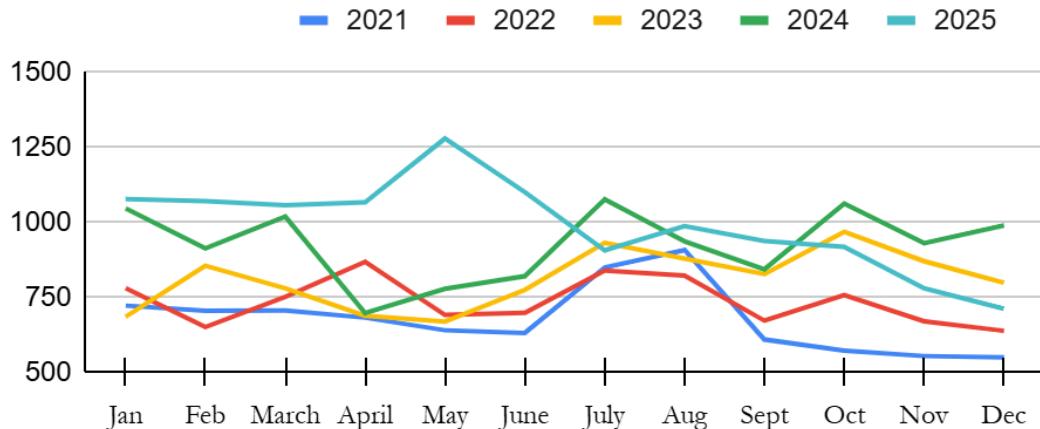
Month	2023	2024	2025
December	314* + 345 at Programs	368* + 395 at 23 Programs	261* + 316 at 21 Programs
November	326* + 347 at Programs	334* + 376 at 21 Programs	314* + 274 at 21 Programs
October	327* + 622 at Programs	448* + 937 at 28 Programs	401* + 808 at 29 Programs
September	352* + 336 at Programs	352* + 500 at 18 Programs	417* + 497 at 21 Programs
August	420* + 162 at Programs	622* + 170 at 11 Programs	493* + 455 at 11 Programs
July	428* + 634 at Programs	732* + 678 at 25 Programs	484* + 752 at 24 Programs
June	395* + 650 at Programs	433* + 700 at 16 Programs	645* + 764 at 22 Programs
May	242* + 259 at Programs	389* + 213 at Programs	638* + 668 at 22 Programs
April	219* + 305 at Programs	370* + 273 at Programs	417* + 326 at 23 Programs
March	266* + 865 at Programs	376* + 781 at Programs	458* + 386 at 28 Programs
February	250*+ 569 at Programs	376* + 674 at Programs	363* + 710 at 23 Programs
January	225*+ 107 at Programs	399* + 100 at Programs	357* + 155 at 17 Programs

CIRCULATION COMPARISON 2021-2025: Circulation is down over the past few months.

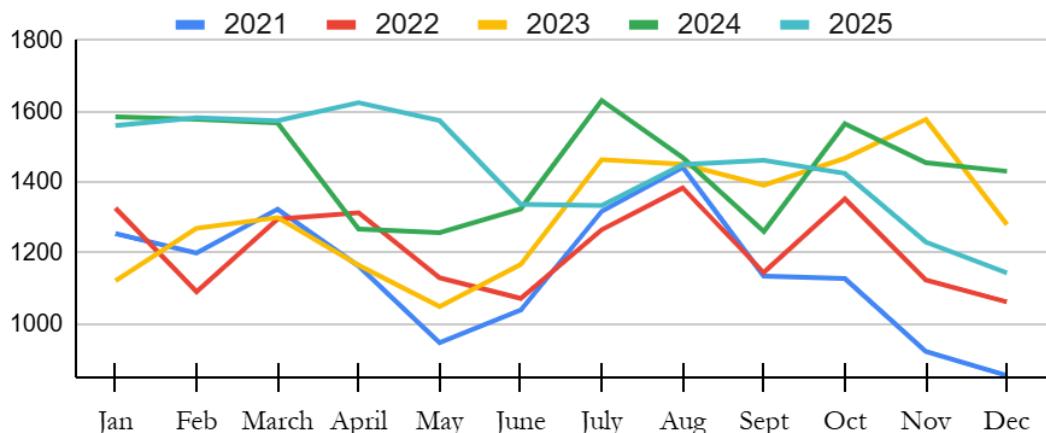


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Total Circulation of all Materials without renewals



Total Circulation of all Materials with renewals



BUILDING USE AND MAINTENANCE

- Dave took care of Fire Extinguisher inspections and replacements. THANK YOU DAVE!
- Dave worked with me on scheduling the large meeting table to be refinished.

2025 Maintenance/Checks have occurred: **BOLD OCCURRED RECENTLY**

Stair Chair (8/27/2025), **Fire Extinguisher Check** (12/2025), Service Alert (4/24/2025) and Fall Visit (10/7/2025), Furnaces/Navien Boiler maintenance Holbrook Heating came 1/29/2025, Holbrook Heating AC maintenance (6/4/2025), Window Washing and Power washing (7/19/2025).

- **NEW**: consider 'permanent' sign for Lili's puppets
- **NEW**: Consider options for lighting for step from platform in front of flowers to front walk way.
- **NEW**: one of back steps is loose
- Need New Grate made in Front Room (metal has split and Dave made temporary wooden one).

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Inns use Reggio Registers. **LORI and DAVE**

- Follow-up on water line issue with Village (Mike White). **DAVE**
- Basement- contact SureTemp about visit to look at dehumidifier and jail heat. **DAVE**
- AFL/MOH Front sign near sidewalk will be refurbished by Yesteryears next year. **DAVE**
- Main Street entry steps are spalling and gaps where mortar is on sides seems to have increased. Met with DAVE and mason 7/12/22 to solicit estimate. **PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**
- Need to install street number – **OPEN ISSUE**
- First floor weatherizing south windows- **OPEN ISSUE- Since did not receive DRI funding, resubmitted in NYS Construction Grant.**
- Stains on interior north wall MOH – **OPEN ISSUE**
- Consider extending concrete walkway from back steps to curb. Also consider a concrete handicapped parking space near back door?

UPCOMING EVENTS: PLEASE CHECK WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK for more

DATE	EVENT	FUNDED BY	TIME & LOCATION (AFL unless noted)
Any time	Overdrive/Libby Eresources help		
Mondays	Fiber Arts Group		4 pm
Mondays	Teen D and D Group		5-6:45pm
Wednesdays	Storytime	Rosen	9:30 am
Wednesdays	Peachtown/Elementary		2 pm
1/16/2026	Dragon Explorers	Rosen	4:30pm
1/20/2026	Nature Impressionist Inspiration		4 pm and ZOOM
2/4/2026	Southern Cayuga Book Club		7 pm
2/7/2026	Take Your Child to the Library Day		10am-2 pm
2/7/2026	The Princess Bride Movie		6:30pm
2/11/2026	Graphic Novel Book Club	Rosen	6 pm
2/12/2026	AFL Annual Meeting		5:30pm
2/18/2026	Family Winter Game Night	Rosen	TBD

Respectfully submitted by Sandy Groth