



BERGENFIELD
PUBLIC LIBRARY

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2021**

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

REBOUND (RĒ'BOUND)

verb

To recover in value, amount, or strength after a previous decrease or decline

RALLY (RALĒ)

intransitive verb

To come together again to renew an effort

I'd like to think that years from now, we will all look back at 2021 as a time of great strength and resilience when dealing with so much uncertainty.

The Library was no exception. In spite of the myriad difficulties caused by the pandemic, including a brief suspension of in-person browsing due to rising positive cases, the Library was still able to bring several new services to Bergenfield residents in 2021, including the launch of its highly popular Passport Application Acceptance service, a unique Library of Things collection and fun in-person programs at Coopers Pond, Memorial Field and Bergenfield High School. The Library building was also enhanced at various points in the year with the installation of new energy efficient and ultimately more cost effective HVAC and lighting systems as well as the implementation of self serve check out and an updated checkout desk and phone system.

The fact that we were able to accomplish all of this while abiding by evolving mandates and remaining healthy is a true testament to the sheer dedication and tenacity of Library staff and the board of trustees.

The Library continues to develop creative ways to expand access to those overwhelmed by a growing list of responsibilities, those with physical limitations, those without steady employment, and those without reliable technology.

The coming year will no doubt bring a new set of challenges. As we prepare to adjust to the "new normal," we are also hard at work on new projects, including installing exterior lockers for after hours pick up, expanding our passport program to include photography services, and replacing the Library's carpet. Investing in the future, we are applying for grant funds, investigating options to replace outdated systems, and continuing to build upon our partnerships with community organizations and the Bergenfield school district. Dismantling barriers to access and ensuring equity to all in our community will continue to be a focus for us in 2022.

We look forward to the journey ahead.

Allison Ballo,
Library Director

IN 2021, BERGENFIELD RESIDENTS...

...LOVE TO READ!

- **11,000** card holders
- Borrowed **127,827** items
- **52,000** library visits
- Over **100** residents participated in this year's program and read a combined total of **669** books.
- **33,146** items loaned to other BCCLS libraries

...LOVE TO LEARN!

- used the Brainfuse service for **656** virtual tutoring sessions
- attended **736** ESL group & 1 on 1 classes
- **6** ESL students passed the U.S. Citizenship exam

...LOVE TO KNOW!

- Staff answered **12,500** reference questions

...LOVE TECHNOLOGY!

- **1,500** desktop PC sessions
- **63,530** wireless sessions
- Borrowed **20,214** eBook, eAudio and eMagazines
- Downloaded **1,613** movies off of the Kanopy service
- **25%** increase in followers on social media

...LOVE TO PARTICIPATE!

- **4,263** adults attended **102** virtual and in-person programs
- **12,381** children attended **164** virtual and in-person programs
- **31** volunteers spent over **900** hours tutoring for the ESL program

...LOVE TO SAVE!

- Average value of materials borrowed on a Bergenfield Library card - **\$686**
- 2021 Appropriation cost per capita - **\$55.43**
- Cost per day to each resident - **\$0.14**
- Residents saved **\$1,600,480** by borrowing our books, DVDs, CDs, magazines, video games, eBooks, Museum Passes and more!

...LOVE TO GET STUFF DONE!

- Staff notarized over **500** documents for residents
- Staff executed **246** U.S. passport applications

...LOVE THEIR LIBRARY!



STRATEGIC PLAN ACTIVITY

how did we do in 2021?

MISSION

The Bergenfield Public Library provides opportunities, resources and services that empower residents of all ages to maximize their true potential and unlock the best in Bergenfield.



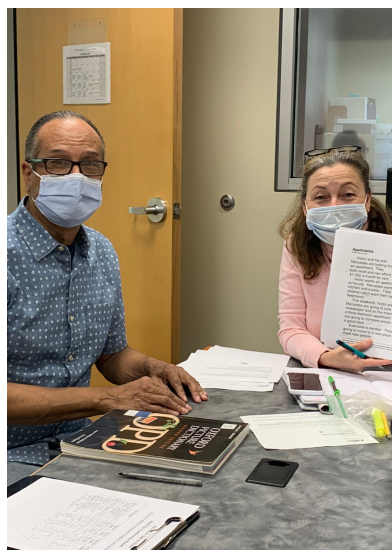
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL ONE: Lead the Community as The Primary Cultural and Civic Center for Lifelong Learning

- Launch of Library of Things collection which includes:
 - Roku sticks with subscriptions to Disney+, Hulu, Netflix and ESPN+
 - Chromebooks
 - Blu-ray player
 - Kindles with preloaded bestsellers
 - Museum Passes - featuring admission to the Museum of Natural History, Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum and all NJ State Parks
 - STEAM kits featuring various musical instruments and robotics tools
- Added Launchpad tablets & Wonder Books pre-recorded audiobooks to the Children's collection
- Hosted 2 cohorts of US Citizenship Exam series
- Hosted in-person programming at Coopers Pond, Memorial Park and South Church. Events included a ghost walk, yoga series, origami workshop and tie-dye class.
- Hosted a diverse slate of multicultural adult programs, including "From Here to Equality: A Virtual Discussion" (celebrating Black History month), "The Trouble with My Name" Zoom lecture by Dr. Javier Avila (celebrating Hispanic Heritage month) and "Filipino American History Month Celebration" Zoom performance
- Launched our first ever Adult Summer Reading Club, which had 31 participants
- Expanded online searchable local history archive with almost 1,000 files and growing! Go to <http://www.bergenfieldlibrary.org/localhistory/> to access the archive.

GOAL TWO: Foster a Comfortable and Friendly Space

- Renovated main circulation desk to 1 primary service point
- Updated phone system
- Installation of picnic table for public use on Anderson Avenue
- Technology upgrades to the building included staff and public printers upgrade, installation of failsafe backup Internet line and installation of MeeScan self-check kiosks and mobile app
- Updated and revised the following policies and procedures:
 - Library of Things policy
 - Meeting Room policy
 - Virtual Library Board Meetings policy
- Library staff participated as members in multiple BCCLS committees including: Policies and Procedures, Technology and Digital Services and Library Administration and Personnel



GOAL THREE: Create Opportunities for Collaboration

- Participated in Bergenfield School District's Strategic Planning Committee
- Hosted Community Earth Day event in tandem with the Borough DPW, Environmental Committee, Green Team and school district
- Youth Services staff participated in the Bergenfield School District's Read Across America week
- Youth Services staff conducted recurring virtual story time assemblies for Lincoln Elementary School
- Collaborated with Bergenfield Health Department to provide a series of information videos on COVID-19
- Worked with the Filipino School of NY/NJ to provide pre-recorded "Kuwentuhang Pilipino Story Time" videos to be posted on the Library's Facebook page. The videos are posted on the 2nd Saturday of each month from October through June
- Acted as drop off venue for Closter Animal Welfare Society, Wayne Interfaith Network Food Pantry and Bloom Empowerment collection boxes.

GOAL FOUR: Strengthen Community Awareness and Engagement

- Distributed mailer postcard to new Bergenfield residents
- Participated in the Borough's Memorial Day Parade and Holiday at Cooper's Pond
- Increased social media engagement on Facebook and Instagram and virtual branch, resulting in a 25% increase in followers.



GOAL FIVE: Increase Operational Excellence, Fiscal Stability and Sustainability

- Submitted proposal for NJ State Library Construction grant funds to renovate the Young Adult Room
- Awarded \$5,000 of funds from NJ CARES Act to purchase AWE machine and ESL Launchpads tablets
- Awarded \$25,000 of funds from ARPA to purchase self serve exterior lockers
- Enrolled in Baker and Taylor Sustainable Shelves program
- Upgraded building to LED lighting and replaced 7 rooftop HVAC units with energy efficient models as part of PSE&G Energy Saver Direct Install Program
- Launched Passport Acceptance program, which generated \$8,855 in revenue
- Received reimbursement for COVID related expenses by FEMA and Bergen County CARES totaling \$ 34,882.65



2022 PRIORITIES

- Redevelopment of Friends of the Bergenfield Library
- Implementation of exterior self serve holds pick up lockers
- Capital projects may include (funding TBD) :
 - Replacing existing carpeting in the building
 - Updating A/V set up in Friends Meeting room
 - Updating security camera system
- Expanded Passport Acceptance services to include weekends and on-site photography options
- Expanded staff participation in community events
- Expanded off site adult and children's programming
- Broaden the Library of Things collection
- Research and development of adult literacy services to existing ESL program
- Research and development of grant funds for permanent off-site Story Walk fixtures at Coopers Pond



2021 SNAPSHOTS

