

Director's Monthly Report

October 2024



Art and pumpkins seemed to be the theme of October. We had two children's programs featuring pumpkins—our usual pumpkin painting fun as part of the Hillsdale Pumpkin Festival and a STEM program in which children got to make pumpkin volcanos! Trick or Treaters got to select a new book to take home as their treat from the library. This month we held our 4th annual mini art exhibit, and Lynn Perella's collage exhibit ran through the end of the month, replaced by an exhibit of drawings by Edwing Gomez, a former Taconic Hills HS library volunteer pursuing a career in architecture. At the end of October, the Hillsdale Housing Committee held a program on ADUs in our community room, which was well attended. Finally, this month we also said good-bye to Tia, who worked here for almost exactly 4 years. She is already missed by our parents and children, not to mention the staff. We posted the job opening and have begun receiving applications. We plan to interview in early December.

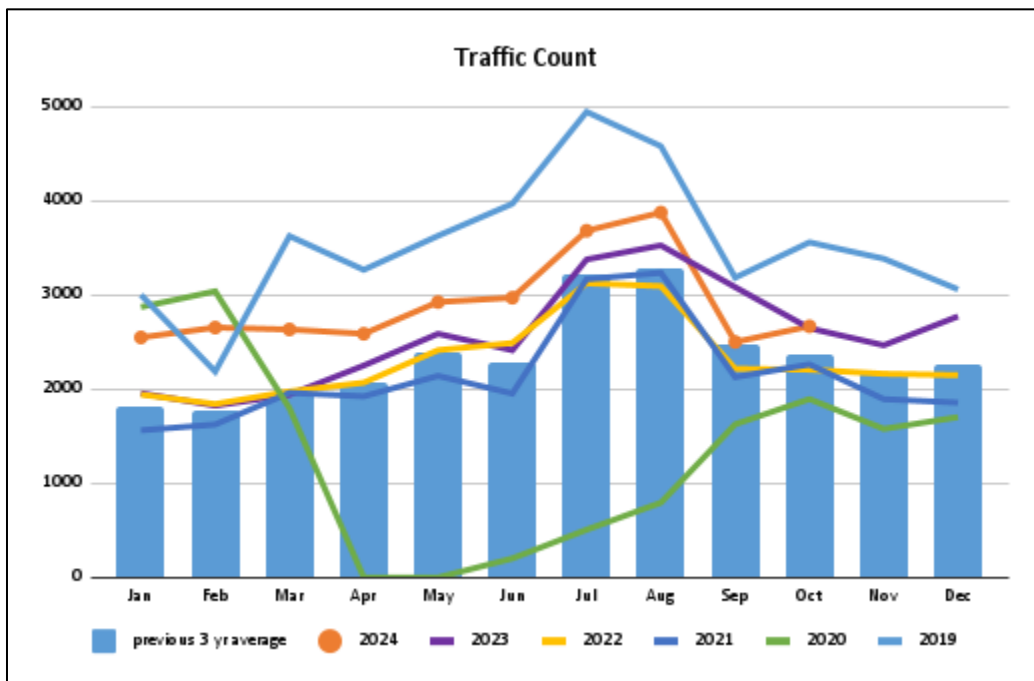
Programs:

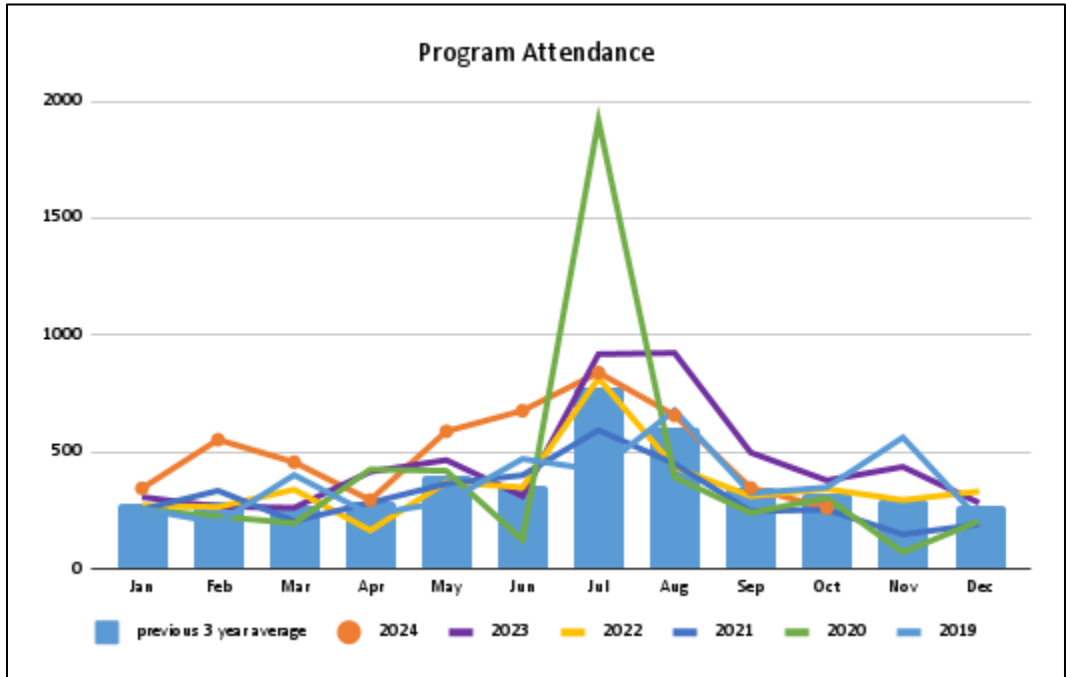
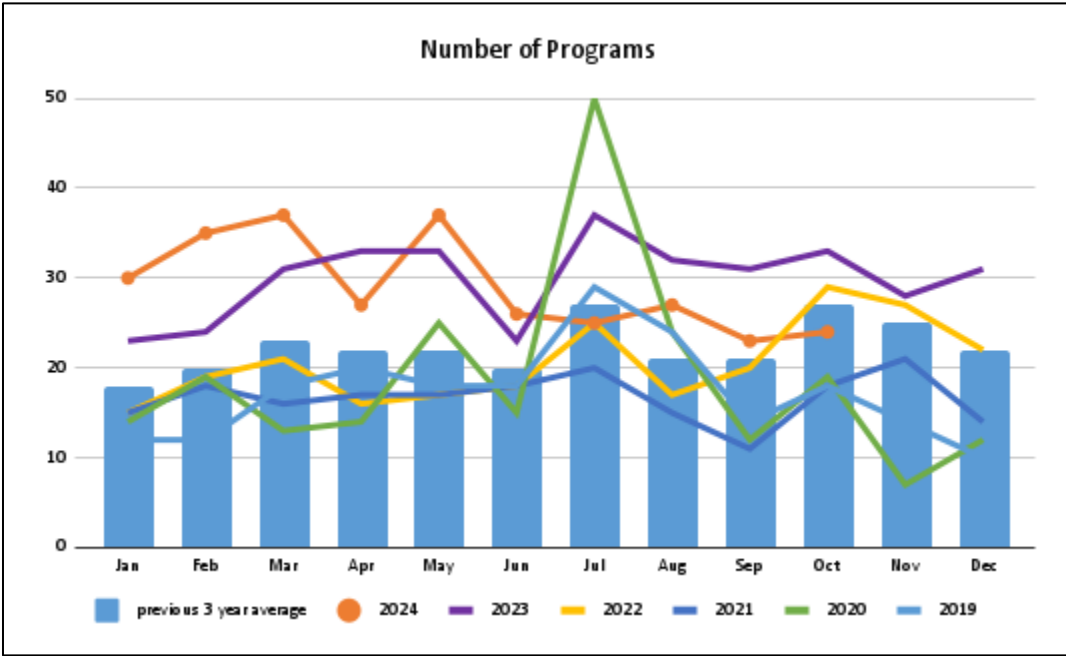
- Tai Chi—average 11 per class
- English Language Learning—average 8 per class
- October 16: Adventure Wednesday—Martin Van Buren NHS—24 kids and 10 adults attended
- October 17: Book Marks! Book Club—10 attended
- October 19: Riverkeeper River Sweep—5 attended
- October 19: Cook Book Club—8 attended
- October 22: STEM Volcano Pumpkins—6 kids and 4 adults attended
- October 24: Tea Time at the Library—10 attended
- October 26: Pumpkin Painting—27 kids and 27 adults attended
- October 28: Zoom Around the World Book Club (with CCLA)
- November 2: Hillsdale Housing Committee Information Session on ADUs—about 30 attended
- November 10: Back to Nature: The Indoor Garden—A Discussion of Houseplants—4 attended

- November 13: Adventure Wednesday: Overmountain Conservation Area—8 kids and 4 adults attended
- November 16: Cook Book Club

Upcoming Events:

- November 21: STEM Bugs!
- November 21: Book Marks! Book Club
- November 21: Tea Time at the Library
- November 23: Concert: Seasons of Light and Hope (John and Ann Marie Farrell)
- November 25: Zoom Around the World Book Club (with CCLA)
- November 30: Film screening, Family matinee: Paddington
- December 4: STEM Snow!
- December 7: Puppet People Marionette Performance: The Last Dragon
- December 11: Adventure Wednesday at Camphill Village
- December 13 and 14: Friends Baked Goods and Soup Sale
- December 14: Make Your Own Holiday Arrangement



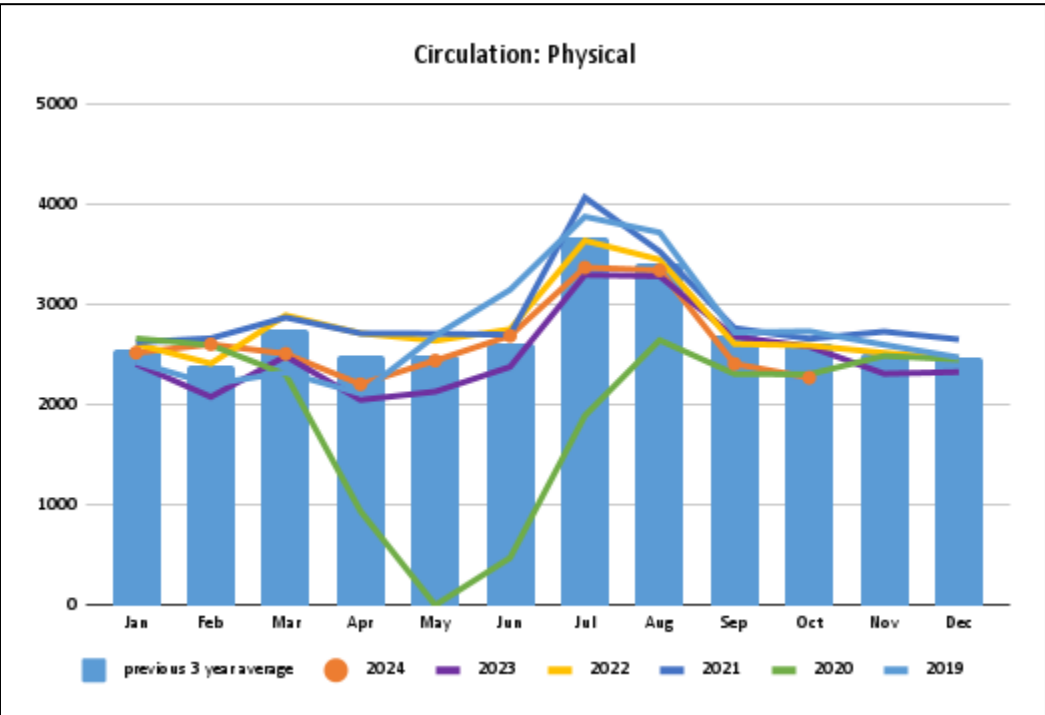
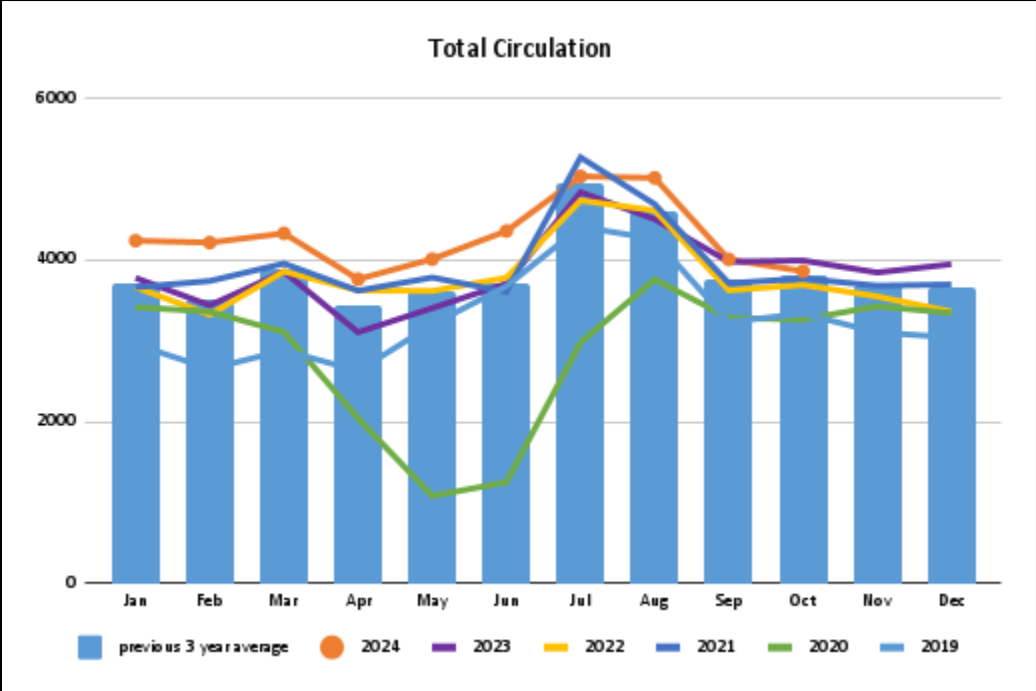


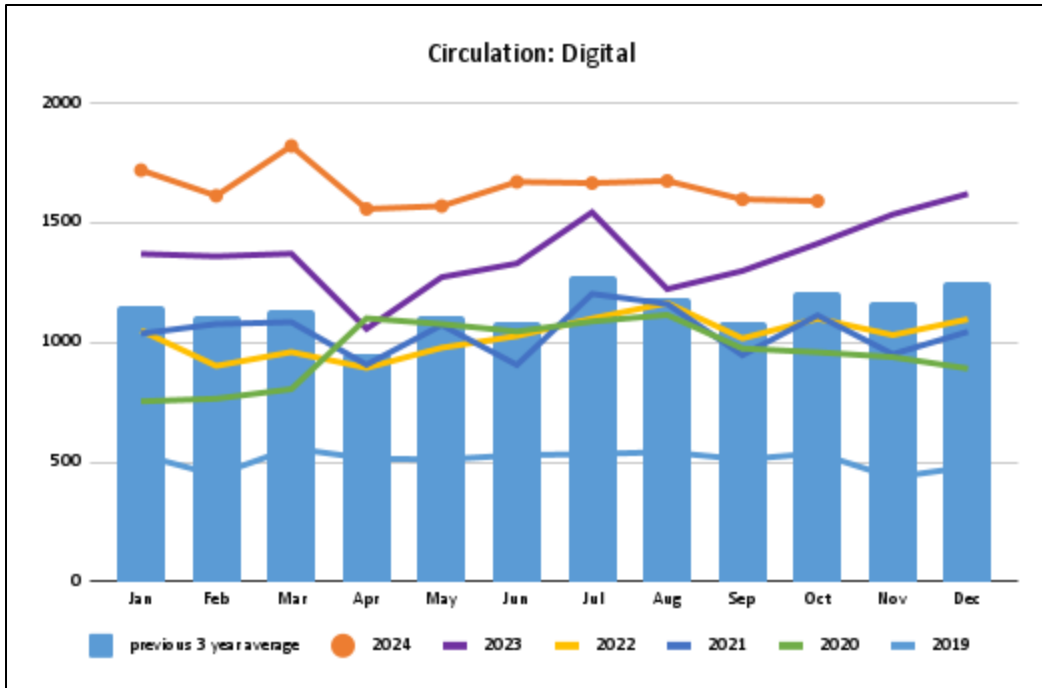
Library Usage:

Program numbers and attendance remain lower than typical largely because of the cut in the number of children’s programs, with Tia’s vacations and then departure. For whatever reason, library materials circulation also dipped a bit in October, slightly below 2023 numbers. At the same time, there were a few more people visiting the library than is typical for October—perhaps for meetings, browsing, or just in search of a quiet space to work.

E-resources continue to grow in popularity and cost. We learned recently that one of our resources, hoopla, which is heavily used for audiobooks, but also has ebooks, videos, and music, has a large amount of low-quality material included, including unvetted self-published and AI-generated content. MHLS cataloging staff has been working to de-prioritize these materials in search results, but the job is overwhelming. Library collection policies generally state that we purchase vetted materials and materials don’t meet our selection criteria—and cost us money whenever someone checks one of these items out. MHLS and other libraries and systems are contacting hoopla to try to learn how this material is getting into the collection and what they plan to do about it. If their answers are unsatisfactory, we may want to drop this resource, popular as it is. I have begun looking into other options (perhaps Blackstone, for audiobooks).

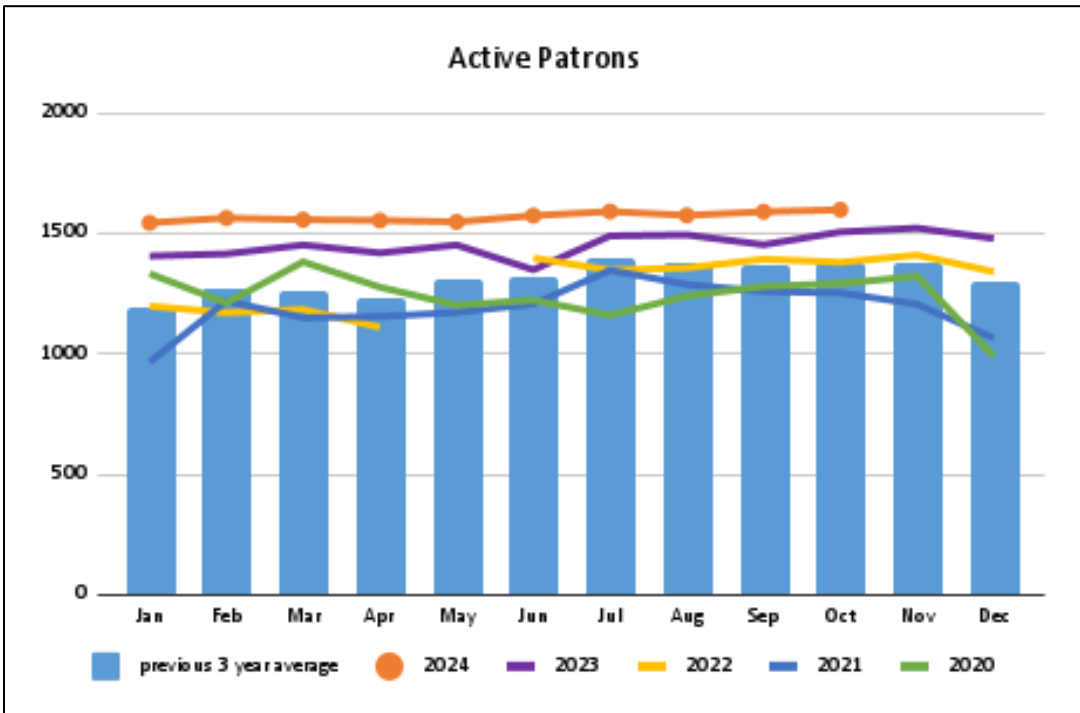
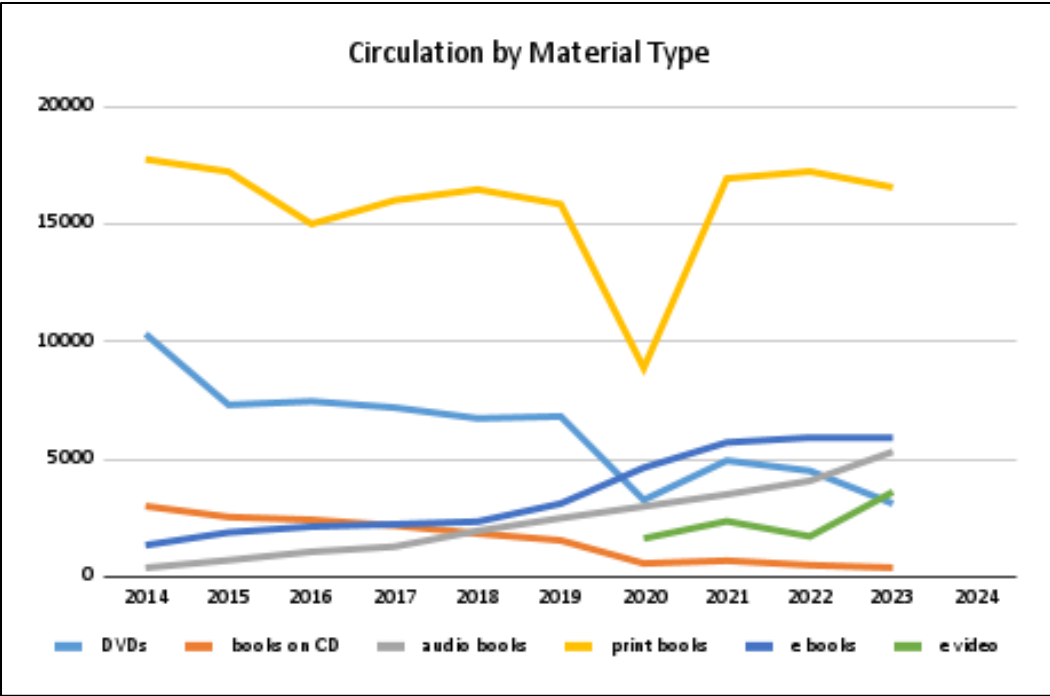
	Oct-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	YTD	Previous 3 yr avg	% of previous 3 yr avg
Active patrons (past yr)	1,506	1544	1564	1557	1554	1548	1574	1591	1575	1596	1598	ave. 1570	1309	120%
Patrons (unexpired)	1,873	1906	1929	1934	1941	1952	1953	1912	1936	1930	1955	ave. 1935	1785	108%
New Patrons	15	24	31	10	21	21	23	32	33	16	16	227	253	90%
Traffic Count	2,646	2548	2653	2633	2587	2924	2970	3681	3874	2500	2666	29,036	23,641	129%
Computer Use	64	72	66	94	83	70	61	72	83	50	65	716	914	78%
Circulation (physical)	2,584	2522	2606	2512	2208	2444	2691	3373	3345	2412	2273	26,386	27,687	95%
Circulation (digital)	1,413	1720	1613	1821	1558	1570	1671	1666	1675	1598	1591	16,483	11314	146%
Museum Passes	60	22	11	9	17	23	33	122	120	46	57	460	371	124%
Database usage	23	334	67	416	327	214	668	303	233	278	160	3,000	3739	80%
Wireless access	602	480	492	453	509	448	528	673	566	421	437	5,007	5608	89%
Website sessions	1,874	2028	1880	2094	2224	2221	2397	2485	2367	1953	1804	21,453	23787	90%
Number of programs	33	30	35	37	27	37	26	25	27	23	24	291	221	132%
Program attendance	378	344	552	456	294	588	676	839	656	346	264	5,015	3926	128%
YouTube views	145	131	251	165	85	78	516	208	128	98	96	1,756	929	189%
Notary	13	22	13	28	10	14	17	31	17	13	13	178	N/A	
Homebound delivery	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	3	1	10	N/A	

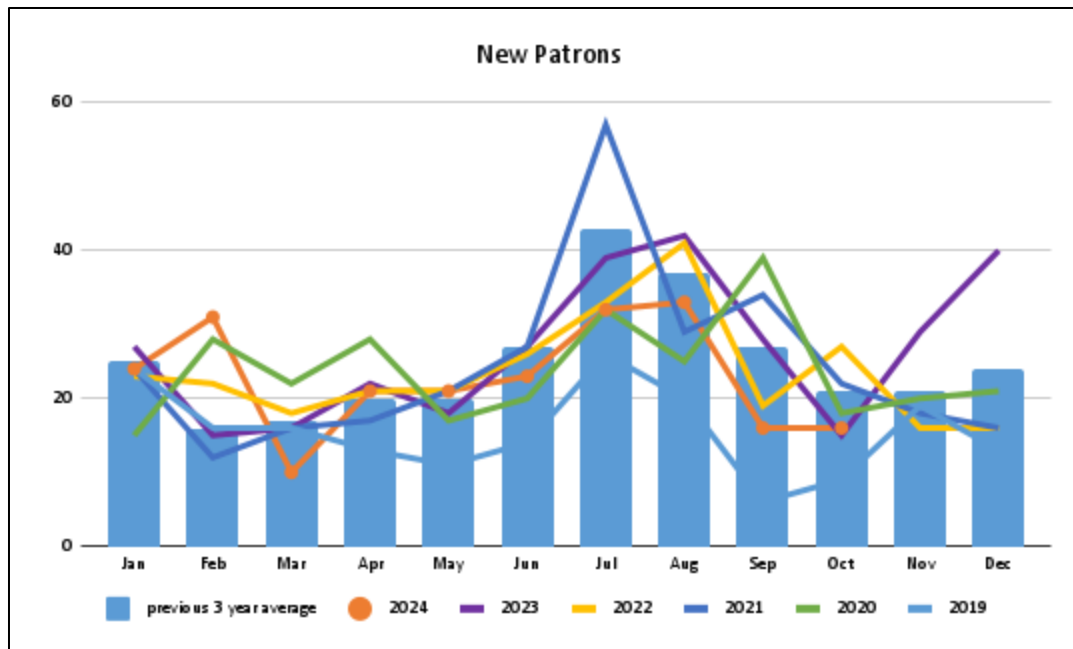




Circulation by Material Type

	Oct-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Total	change from previous year	% change
DVDs	273	295	232	268	215	277	196	267	297	189	163	2399	-158	-6%
videos	226	194	296	298	222	273	359	323	304	235	231	2735	-318	-10%
books on CD	16	13	50	22	27	23	29	21	36	32	31	284	-38	-12%
audiobooks	449	594	543	566	539	547	520	548	591	544	571	5563	1223	28%
print books	1345	1364	1476	1306	1144	1313	1591	2032	1909	1356	1185	14676	707	5%
e books	470	570	449	575	566	562	545	539	529	523	503	5361	484	10%
museum passes	60	22	11	9	17	23	33	122	120	46	57	460	1	0%
hotspots	13	12	11	7	10	11	10	14	11	11	12	109	-15	-12%
camping equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	13	0	1	24	17	243%





Staffing and Professional Development:

- Posted job listing for Children’s/Youth Services and Programming Associate. Will begin reviewing applications week of November 25.
- Tammy worked on budget
- Tammy completed the annual NYS tax cap paperwork

Building and Grounds

- Ordered new event sign from Larkin. Hope to have it installed later this month
- Carpets were cleaned while closed for Veterans Day
- Roof repair has begun; once complete will need to do the mold remediation and ceiling repair.
- Received a new copier/printer/fax machine with new 5-year contract—fortunately cheaper than previous contract.

Grants/Fundraising:

- Received \$3000 from Berkshire Taconic Community Fund ELLN grant for materials for Head Start and holiday book give-away.
- All paperwork submitted to receive state reimbursement for folding partition (\$17,750)

Staff Also

- Staff installed a fall/Halloween book display and then a Native American book display for Native American History month.
- Discussed possibility of changing hours in the coming year to be open one more evening and on Sunday afternoon, to allow more time slots for programs/meetings that are accessible to those who are working or in school.
- Staff are planning a new fiction book club to launch in the new year.

Columbia County Libraries Association

- Proposing budget (to be voted on in December) that cuts the amount each library gets, due to flat funding and increasing costs for other services, jointly purchased.
- Signed final contract with state to receive funding for a community read in the spring—will be reading Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*.
- Planning dinner for library trustees and county legislators/town supervisors in the spring
- Looking into other museum pass software due to recent issues with current provider.

MHLS

- About half of RJCL trustees still need to complete the state-mandated 2 hours of training for 2024. This must be completed by the end of the year. Online training can be accessed at <https://my.nicheacademy.com/my-niche/academies>.
- MHLS expects flat funding from the state for 2025, so there will be flat funding for the Central Library, which buys nonfiction books and e-resources for the system.
- All MHLS member libraries who had 414 votes this year had their ballot measures pass, many for substantial increases and by comfortable margins. Would like to see every library on the ballot every year.
- An MHLS app, customizable by library, will be available soon.
- In 2025, MHLS will be focused on financial planning for its director and trustee training.