



## ANNUAL REPORT 2015

The year 2015 saw many achievements and new developments at the Mountainside Public Library, in areas from technology through programming.

**Circulation** The circulation of library materials continues to be one important measure of use. With a return to full summer hours after two years of repairs and HVAC construction, and despite weather closures necessitated by a harsh winter, circulation of library materials for both Children and Young Adults has shown a slight increase in 2015. E-books are also very popular with many of our patrons, as evidenced by the continued growth in their circulation through both [eLibraryNJ](#) for patrons of all ages (32% increase) and [Tumblebooks](#) for children, which was expanded in May from K-3 to K-5 (771% increase). A gradual drop in the circulation of physical materials is also in keeping with continuing nationwide usage trends and should be attributed in part to the reduction in purchases of new materials, due to an ever tightening budget, as well as an increase in the use of electronic titles, as an increasing number of patrons are choosing to download titles to their devices remotely, with their Mountainside Library card. Regular DVD “3 for the price of 2” events timed to school holidays were very popular and many of our patrons took advantage of the offers. Although audiovisual materials have generally shown a slight downward trend in circulation, they do remain a very popular and important part of our collection.

<b>Collection</b>	<b>Total '15</b>	<b>Total '14</b>
<b>ADULT</b>		
Books	<b>15898</b>	<b>15982</b>
Audiobooks	<b>993</b>	<b>1136</b>
CDs	<b>1614</b>	<b>1925</b>
DVDs	<b>3472</b>	<b>4194</b>
Periodicals	<b>486</b>	<b>452</b>
<i>subtotal - Adult</i>	<b>22463</b>	<b>23689</b>
<b>JUVENILE</b>		
Books	<b>19591</b>	<b>18505</b>
Audiobooks	<b>214</b>	<b>199</b>
CDs	<b>163</b>	<b>192</b>
DVDs	<b>1354</b>	<b>1352</b>
<i>subtotal - Juv</i>	<b>21322</b>	<b>20248</b>
<b>Young Adult</b>		
Books	<b>1537</b>	<b>1310</b>
Audiobooks	<b>12</b>	<b>45</b>
<i>subtotal - Young Adult</i>	<b>1549</b>	<b>1355</b>
eLibraryNJ	<b>1916</b>	<b>1551</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47250</b>	<b>46843</b>

**Reference Interactions** Our Reference Librarians fielded all varieties of questions in 2015, from employment applications to research assistance and computer tutorials. The Reference desk is always staffed by a Librarian

during open hours, with Circulation staff also ready to assist with simple Reference inquiries as needed. Interlibrary Loan continues to be a very important function of our Reference service: any items which have been released for more than six months and are not in our collection can be requested for Mountainside residents from other libraries, through Interlibrary Loan. In 2015, Mountainside residents borrowed a total of 550 items through this service. The Mountainside Library also lent a total of 254 items to other libraries across the country, for a total of 804 Interlibrary Loan transactions during the course of the year and a 7.8% increase in borrowing from 2014.

Year	Items Borrowed	Items Lent	Total Transactions
2013	586	138	724
2014	510	321	831
2015	550	254	804

Our online database offerings constitute another important aspect of our Reference service. These databases are accessible 24 hours a day with a Mountainside Library card. Despite budget-driven reductions in database offerings by the State Library, use of our databases has continued to be strong, often peaking in conjunction with students' school assignments. The Pronunciator language learning database, sponsored by the *Ryan Patrick Faella Foundation*, continues to be very popular and has recently added a component for prospective US citizens. The Corfacts business-to-business database sees a great deal of use by business people and job seekers alike. Patrons are also increasingly pleased to discover access to many newspapers and magazines through the EBSCO database, provided by the State Library. Despite cutbacks, general database use remains strong. The library's Reference staff welcomes all of your inquiries and looks forward to assisting you with answers to your questions.

**Programs** Programs, for both entertainment and education, continue to be an increasingly important library offering to the public, as evidenced by a 26% increase in program attendance this year. Some of our presenters offer their programs free of charge, while our paid programming is generously subsidized by the Friends of the Library. Our acclaimed children's programming fosters literacy and a love of reading from babyhood on, with "Lapsits", Story Times, Kindergarten Story Time Theater, August story times at the Mountainside pool, Summer Reading clubs and activities, and carefully chosen guest artists. Our many regular Origami, Squiggle Club and Lego Club programs continue to be very popular and build on the concept of STEAM education. In addition to stand alone events for adults on topics as varied as gardening, sports nutrition and organization, our program series have also garnered an enthusiastic response. Our monthly Career Networking Group, a joint effort of the Scotch Plains and Mountainside Libraries, draws a great variety of speakers and welcomes back successful alumni to share their stories. Saturday Musical Getaways offer monthly live performances from musicians representing a variety of genres. Our Opera Festival, sponsored by Mena Clemson and the T. Robel Hill Foundation and now in its fourth season, showcases famous performances on DVD. The Tuesday Night Movie series screens newly released feature films, documentaries and beloved classics. In July we launched the Brown Bag Academy, a weekly series featuring lectures from the *Great Courses*, and October saw the debut of the Monthly Guided Meditation Series, led by Sally Younghans.

In 2015 we held 411 programs, attended by 8177 patrons, which represents an 11% increase in programs and a 33.8% increase in attendance over 2014. Some of this is attributable to the resumption of normal summer hours and programming as compared to 2014, but the numbers also reflect the increasing importance of library programming to the community.

Year	Number of Programs	Total Attendance
2013	396	6995
2014	370	6110
2015	411	8177

**Summer Reading** The summer reading theme for 2015 was “Every hero has A Story”. A total of 112 spectators enjoyed our 3 special presenters: Caryn Lyn (violin), Rick Mikula (butterflies) and the Raptor Trust. 519 titles were read by 6 family reading teams, and 47 individual readers from Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade read for 43,601 minutes or 727 hours. Book groups read for a total of 29,580 minutes or 493 hours. Prizes were given to the younger readers and raffle tickets for gift certificates to the older ones, with a wrap up party and movie for 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, at which each participant received a new book as a gift. The Summer Reading program was sponsored by the *Friends of the Mountainside Library*.

**Patron Registration** 187 new patrons were registered by the Library in 2015, of which 175 were residents of Mountainside. In addition, the library issued 80 replacement cards.

**Collection Management** Continuing the trend of the last few years, spending on materials has remained low, in response to a consistently tight budget and rising fixed costs. Fortunately, this regrettable but necessary reduction in spending on library materials was alleviated again this year in part by contributions from the *Friends of the Mountainside Library* and by private, memorial and community donations.

**Technology** 2015 saw the completion of our site-wide computer upgrade from Windows XP to Windows 7, generously sponsored by the *Watts Mountainside Community Foundation*. In response to a federal requirement, passed down to all New Jersey libraries by the State Library, a wireless campus system was installed in September. This system has not only improved and secured the signal for our patrons, but also allowed for the collection of wireless use statistics which all libraries are now required to report annually. In March, the library participated in our first annual MakerDayNJ, an event designed to highlight the essential role of libraries in supporting the national maker culture trend and the principles of STEM and STEAM education. Thanks to a fall grant from the *Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders* we have been able to purchase a 3-D printer, which will enhance our offerings for future MakerDayNJ events and further support these curriculum initiatives for the students in our community.

**Buildings and Grounds** The new HVAC system installed in 2014 cools the building effectively, but does not remove humidity during the cooling season, which has led to problems with the collection and with printers and copiers. It is also significantly more expensive to operate, which was unanticipated for a new technology with a greener design than the old HVAC which was original to the building. We are working with the Borough to resolve the problem and hope to have it working correctly in 2016.

The library had 48,044 visits this year, up from 45,095 in 2014, resulting in 45,334 checkouts, valued at \$944,760.56.

**Friends of the Mountainside Library** The Friends of the Mountainside Library work tirelessly throughout the year to champion our efforts. The proceeds of their sales and events are used to subsidize and enhance our programs and services, which are still feeling the lingering effects of the economic downturn. In addition to their annual fall membership drive, the Friends maintain a busy schedule of activities all year long, including their spring and fall book sales and the more recent jewelry and accessories sale. Such projects require enormous advance planning and effort and the library truly appreciates their dedication and hard work. The Friends have made possible all of the following and more:

1. Both our website and the Wowbrary database, which highlights new additions to our collection on the library website's home page, are sponsored yearly by the Friends.
2. While some of our program presenters offer their services free of charge, many earn their living at it and do charge a fee. These paid programs offer our patrons an extra level of enrichment and are generously sponsored by the Friend of the Library. All of the performers, activities and prizes in the Summer Reading program are sponsored by the Friends.

**Community Support** As we constantly strive to respond to the needs and interests of our patrons and to improve our services and offerings to the community of Mountainside, it is important to recognize the wonderful support we receive in return, from individuals, foundations and community groups such as the *Newcomers Club*.

**Board of Trustees** Dr. Chris Belden, CSA's designee to the Board of Trustees, stepped down in March, after many years of faithful service to the library. His position has been filled by Kate Motz, School Board Liaison to the Mountainside Library. Trustee Doreen Lane announced her departure from the Board of Trustees at the end of December 2015. She has also given generously of her time and talent to the library and will be missed. The final year of her unexpired term will be filled by Maya Frungillo. Trustees Nancy Caffrey and Sarah Post have been reappointed to the Board of Trustees for terms which will run through December of 2020.

**Personnel** Barbara Root retired in June, after working at the library for over 30 years, and we wish her all the best in this new chapter of her life. Her position has been filled by Gail Bauer, already known to our patrons as a member of our Circulation staff. In August, Barbie Slauch took a full-time position elsewhere, but chose to remain as a member of our part-time evening Circulation staff. In September, Jenny Zbrizher replaced her as a member of our part-time day and weekend Circulation staff.

**Looking Ahead** We expect 2016 to be a year of stability and growth, as we build on the projects of previous years. While the budget will continue to be very tight, the Mountainside Public Library has had the good fortune to be one of the libraries in Union County to see our minimum allocation increase slightly, yet again, for the year 2016. Nevertheless, we will continue to put a priority on seeking the extra funding which enables us to fulfill our mission to serve the community to the best of our ability and in the way in which it deserves. We are proud to be your library and to play such an important role in the life of the community.

Thank you for your continued support,

Marilyn J. Favreau, Director