

Hubbard Free Library
November 14, 2019

Hallowell Asked. The Hubbard answered.

In early 2019, the Hubbard hosted two public forums and distributed a survey to 1,585 postal addresses in Hallowell. We wanted to learn from the community about the types of programming and services you believe the library could and should provide. The community response was fantastic; thank you.

We are working hard to improve and expand our offerings based on your input. We want to share the progress made so far.

The **first goal** we addressed is to increase our focus on children, teen and family-friendly offerings. We increased the number of monthly programs we host from 4 to over 20. This summer, we opened our reading program to all ages, and had record participation, with over 1500 books read. We are adding a winter reading program beginning December 17th.

To accommodate working families, we added a Saturday children's story hour. We also added diverse children's programming for all ages, including STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) projects and Dinovember (monthly theme with educational programs about dinosaurs).

We added several programs specifically for teenagers. Our new monthly Teen Advisory Time lets teenagers provide input on what they want to see from the library. And, we created volunteer opportunities for teenagers. An exchange student was able to fulfill the volunteer requirements of his program (and more) at the Hubbard, and students from Hall-Dale High School volunteered at the library for Day of Caring.

In October, 1156 people visited the Hubbard.

The **second goal** is to increase library offerings outside of our walls. We hosted booths at Old Hallowell Day and the Woodstock Festival this summer enabling us to interact with more of the community. Also, the Row House Historical Society generously hosted a Lobster Stew Fundraiser for us in September at the American Legion. We had overflow seating and live music at the library, and guests meandered and socialized freely between both buildings.

The **third goal** is to work with other community organizations. We collaborated with the Hallowell Arts Committee & Vision Hallowell to provide children's and adult programming for Maine Craft Weekend, including a special craft project and book binding workshop. Our director, Annie Kromhout, joined the Hallowell Arts & Cultural Committee, and is working on a collaboration for the Maine Bicentennial Celebration. During Hall Dale Middle School's observance of Hallowell Ancestry Day, students visited the library. Local historian, Sam Weber, gave a brief history lesson about the Hubbard, how it started and has evolved. Students received an introduction to the Hubbard and a tour. We welcomed the college students moving into the dorms at Steven's Commons with gift bags containing free books and information about the library.

The **fourth goal** is to meet unmet community needs. We are excited to announce that we will be lending snowshoes this winter, free of charge. More details will be coming soon, but we are accepting donations of snowshoes in good working order. Please contact us if you have any snowshoes to donate. We are also looking into adding additional programs, and are considering creating a tool library and/or kitchen supply library.

The **fifth goal** is to connect with local businesses. We are collaborating with Scrummy Afters on our winter reading program (they will give a talk about candy making). The Library Director lead a Harry Potter Trivia session during their Scrummy's Harry Potter Scavenger Hunt in October. We are collaborating regularly with Red Cloak Tours. The Hubbard is a stop on Red Cloak's Haunted History Tour each week. We give a 15-minute talk on the history of library to participants.

The **final goal** is to improve the financial well-being and of the library and expand capacity. The Hubbard operates on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. We have increased our fundraising efforts dramatically. We are on track to raise as much as 50% more for the Annual Fund than last year. And, we are in ongoing discussions with the City of Hallowell regarding an increase in city support for the Hubbard.

We are also increasing the number of fundraising events we host. Since July 1, we hosted a book sale and cooperated in a lobster stew fundraiser hosted by the Row House Historic Society.

We hosted a Kick-Off event for our 2019 Annual Fund on Friday, November 15th featuring Maine State Historian and Hubbard Trustee Earle Shettleworth's presentation on the role of the history of the Hubbard Family in Hallowell and in the evolution of the Hubbard Free Library. Over 95 people participated and made on-site donations of more than \$700. Our Poinsettias Sale logged sales of more than 120 plants. We will host a holiday event and Poinsettia pickup on Saturday, December 7th. Watch for more fundraising events in 2020.

The Hubbard is keen to increase library usage and membership by community members across all demographics, interests and perspectives.

To the people who participated in the forums and survey and to the many people who commented subsequently and who continue to offer suggestions and constructive criticism, thank you for your participation in the forum and survey, and your continued patronage of the Hubbard Free Library. Please let us know what else you would love to see from the Hubbard.

We are here for you!