

# Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Prepared by Janine West, Director

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



The Library was important for our community during the pandemic. When things were very uncertain, the Library made people feel more stable and supported, even during the times our librarians were only able to assist residents at a distance. The pandemic disrupted our lives, so the Library changed how it worked. The library staff worked hard to provide virtual resources, including online access to e-books, audiobooks, and streaming services. It also offered online programming, including story times, book clubs, and educational resources. This helped to keep our community engaged and connected.

This annual report details the programs and services the Library offered in 2022. It's an impressive list. It was made possible because of the many talented and creative people who work there, under the leadership of Library Director Janine West, who marked her 40<sup>th</sup> year at the library in 2022.

I am happy to report that the Library has returned to doing most of its activities in person, particularly for children and teens. In 2023, I look forward to the Library expanding its hybrid programming for adults and seniors so one can participate regardless of whether they want to do so from home or come in person. We know how important the library is to our community, and we want to make sure it stays a good resource for everyone who lives here.

I want to thank the library staff for their hard work. They are helping our community during these challenging times. I encourage people to use the Library's services and programs, whether online or in person. Together, we can continue to support and strengthen our community through learning and literacy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitchell Brownstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Mitchell Brownstein**  
Mayor







## MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

It is my pleasure to report that in 2022, our library was able to resume many of the programs and services that had been disrupted by the pandemic. We are grateful for your continued support and patience as we navigated these unprecedented times.

As the pandemic continued to evolve, we adapted our services to ensure the safety of our patrons and staff. Our staff worked tirelessly to make sure that our online resources were readily available and that we continued to provide reference and research assistance. In-person visits were limited for a while, but we were happy to reintroduce them as soon as it was safe to do so.

We have resumed many of our popular programs and events, including, story times, children’s programming, movies, concerts and lectures. We have also reintroduced some of our maker programs, and we are excited to see the return of our teen programming.



Although COVID-19 is not over, we are confident that we have turned a page. We will make any necessary adjustments to our services to ensure that we are able to continue providing our community with access to the information and resources that they need.

Thank you for your continued support of our library, and we look forward to serving you in the coming year.

*Janine West*

**Janine West**  
Library Director



## OUR MISSION

Responding to our community’s social, educational, creative and cultural needs in an inclusive and welcoming way.

## OUR VISION

Empowering everyone to live a happier and healthier life by fostering creativity, discovery and social connection.

# 2022 | YEAR REVIEW

**265,960**

items checked out



**31,519**

digital items checked out



**8,444**

active members

**1,774**

new members



**1,467**

Facebook followers

**272**

Instagram followers



**345**

programs offered

**6,308**

program attendees



**111,676**

library visits

The library averaged over 305 visitors each day!



**166,128**

visits to our website

**21,106**

reference questions answered



**88**

tech training sessions

[csllibrary.org](http://csllibrary.org)

514-485-6900

## YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2022, the Library continued to face ongoing challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted its operations and programming. At the beginning of the year, in-person visits were not possible and the Pick-Up Service was operating under an evening curfew. However, the Library was able to resume in-person visits in February. Initially, only one person was allowed per table, which was later increased to two people, and proof of vaccination was required. However, these requirements were eventually dropped, and the Library expanded its hours of operation.

As the pandemic situation improved, the Library returned to its regular operations in May, with the café being opened to the public and the weekend hours being expanded. Although the Library was cautious in bringing programming, it began to offer in-person programming in late spring, with adjustments made for room capacities and various mask-wearing requirements. Many of the summer programs were held outside, including Summer in the City events. By the fall, the Library began offering some hybrid programming to allow those who were hesitant to attend the ability to participate.



Throughout the year, the Library adapted to changing circumstances and continued to provide valuable services to the community. In-person activities that were held at the Library included the Tax Clinic, movies in the auditorium, children's programming, a classical concert, and a performance by *YidLife Crisis* in August. The Library provided masks to the public as needed, and it continued to prioritize the safety and well-being of its staff and visitors.





# COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

## SOCIAL MISSION

Part of the Library's social mission is to facilitate projects that give back to and/or support the community. In 2022, this took shape through donations, environmental activism, mental health and physical health initiatives including Care Calls and Home Library Service, and volunteerism.

### Ukraine

When the war started in Ukraine, the Côte Saint-Luc Public Library came to the aid of the Ukrainian community by collecting monetary donations and clothing. The Library sold solidarity ribbons that were made by staff as well as volunteers. The funds raised were donated to Federation CJA who used them to provide direct support. The community response to the fundraising campaign was overwhelmingly positive that it was sometimes a challenge to keep up the demand for ribbons. By bringing the community together for a common cause, the Côte Saint-Luc Public Library demonstrated the power of compassion and generosity in times of need.

### Teens and Mental Health

The Ministry of Culture and Communications Inclusion Grant concluded in 2022 with a focus on mental well-being, inclusion, and community-building for teenagers. The grant was repurposed in 2021 to help manage the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of teens. The Library and the Recreation Department partnered with Ometz to bring mental health and wellness programs to the Teen Thursday series. The grant allowed the Library to purchase anti-stress kits and hold crafting and



John Grant School workshop

anti-stress programs. The Library also collaborated with John Grant School to provide mindfulness and bibliotherapy workshops for 41 students. The grant culminated in September 2022 with a virtual author visit from A.F. Steadman and a writing contest for JPPS-Bialik students.

### Home Library Service

In 2022, the Library counted 283 members who were part of the Home Library Service and was able to resume deliveries by a team of 10 dedicated volunteers. Kathy Aubie has continued in her roll as the primary contact for the service, with the invaluable help of circulation staff who helped prepare library materials for delivery.



Home Library Service staff and volunteers delivered 9,885 items to 3,110 homes in 2022—more than 200 home visits, and almost 300 more items delivered than in 2021.

What becomes clear when looking through notes and recorded comments of thanks is the degree to which the service contributes to the quality of life of our members—HLS has been called “life-saving” too many times to count. But our favourite note of thanks from 2022 comes from one long-time HLS member, who said that the service “really saved her buns” over the past few years!

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

## Care Calls

Enrollment in the city's Care Calls Service declined in 2022 from 43 to 38 members due to transitions of independent-living seniors to residences, or moves made to be closer to family members. Staff member Linda Whittaker continued to be a steady, cheerful voice for our Care Calls recipients, with Kathy Aubie and Katie Bezaire filling in when needed. Recipients often mention what a difference it makes to their days and weeks to hear a friendly, engaged voice on the other end of the line, and how much they appreciate the city's recognition of their needs.

## Tax Clinic

After a 2-year hiatus due to Covid-19, the Library brought back the Tax Clinic. In April, volunteers completed 25 tax returns for our low-income population. This was lower than the previous year, in part due to covid restrictions and precautions, as well as a smaller core of volunteers.

In the summer, Antonella Lalli applied for the second year of a 3-year grant program and in December, the Library received the news from MP Anthony Housefather that the Library had been awarded \$625 for our efforts in this important initiative.

## COLLABORATIONS

### House Plant Swap

On October 15, a plant swap event was held in the Greenspon Auditorium, attracting 75 people of all ages. The event was organized by Bronwen Cathey who invited community partners and local businesses to participate and who donated nearly \$700 in plant-related prizes. The event was also education-forward and aimed to educate participants about Monarch Friendly Cities initiative. The event was well received and was considered a great success. Local author and Monarch Garden Founding Volunteer, Myra Shuster, wrote that it was "a fabulous achievement of extensive and effective networking," and wrote a piece about the plant swap that was published in *The Suburban* and *The Jewish Standard*.





# COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

## Monarch Butterfly Initiative

The Côte Saint-Luc Library continued its commitment to being a designated Monarch-friendly city and taking various measures in 2022 to achieve this goal. The Seed Library was reopened after a two-year hiatus and included a variety of seeds, including milkweed which is essential for monarch butterflies. The monarch gardening team, made up of 6 teen volunteers, worked hard to maintain the Monarch Oasis by planting, weeding, and mulching. The team was led by adult volunteer Nicky Fridman, who taught the teens about maintaining an outdoor garden and the importance of monarch butterflies and pollinators to the environment.

To engage and educate the public, the Library organized several programs for children. These included a Seed Bomb-making activity, a butterfly mobile-making session, and a Young Scientists! program presented by McGill University, where kids learned about the butterfly life cycle. Additionally, educational signage was installed in the garden to explain the significance of the monarch butterfly and the efforts made by Côte Saint-Luc to protect it. Overall, the Library is working hard to create a pollinator-friendly environment and educate the community about the importance of monarch butterflies.



Monarch Butterfly Oasis interpretive sign



McGill University's Young Scientists! program



Milkweed seed kit



Seed library



## COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION



### Jane's Walk

The 2022 edition of the Côte Saint-Luc Jane's Walk was held on Sunday, May 8. Library Director Janine West, and Councillors Dida Berku and Mitch Kujavsky, revisited one of the earlier areas of Côte Saint-Luc, taking a closer look at Wolseley Avenue and some of the old homes and the families that resided in them from the 1910s to the 1940s. The narrative focused on how early farmers, as well as the railways, contributed to the growth of the area, culminating with a look at the two homes occupied by poet Irving Layton. The walk gathered close to 50 interested residents and non-residents and was a great success!



### The Lilly Toth Miniature Book Exhibit

On October 26, in collaboration with the Jewish Public Library, our Library presented a selection of miniature books from the Lilly Toth Miniature book collection. The books were varied and fascinating, and the presentation described the particulars of miniature books, where they originated, their peak popularity and usage, as well as a relative explanation of their cultural and financial value.

### A Shot of St. Urbain on an Autumn Afternoon

On September 21, the Library screened two films on classic reel to reel in partnership with the Jewish Public Library and Cinéclub Film Society: *Our Streets Were Paved with Gold* by Filmmaker Albert Kish which revisited Montreal's St. Lawrence Boulevard in the '70s and *The Street* by Caroline Leaf, an award-winning animated poignant interpretation of a short story by Montreal author Mordecai Richler. The Jewish Public Library brought an exhibit of archival material tied to Richler and Montreal's Jewish life in the 1940s.

## BROADENING OUR SERVICES

### BOOK CLUB FOR FRANCOPHONES

The Library hosts different book clubs which appeal to a variety of tastes. Wanting to include francophone patrons, the Library launched *Le Salon Littéraire d'Amélie* with Amélie Boivin Handfield in October. During the first meeting, Amélie discussed

Marc Levy's *C'est arrivé la nuit* in conjunction with the author's virtual visit. There have been three subsequent talks and the Library is hoping that the club will soon find its audience.

### THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY

With the help of Library and Culture Committee member Sandra Cambone, the Library is working to provide collections, services, and programs for the Italian community of Côte Saint-Luc. Led by Antonella Lalli, they organized and hosted a game of Tombola (Italian bingo) on December 14. All registrants were asked to bring in a nonperishable food

item to donate to St. Richard's Christmas basket food drive. The event was a big success due to the marketing efforts made by the Library team. Fifteen residents attended the event and contributed to the food drive. Joe Panunto, on behalf of St. Richard's Parish, thanked everyone for the food donations as well as the library for hosting this fun event.



### CHILDREN'S SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

This year, the Children's Librarians added curated picture book and chapter book backpacks featuring popular themes or genres, including Indigenous Voices and Rainbow Picture Books to the collection. In addition, board games were purchased and catalogued for families to take home and play with for the week.





# A PLACE FOR TEENS

## TEEN FRIDAYS AFTER HOURS

The Children's Library was able to bring back *Teen Fridays After Hours* over the summer giving teens an opportunity to socialize during a time when the library is closed. Teens were excited to gather in person again and the volunteers were as much participants as they were planners, showing how teen-led programming can make for successful events.



## GUESS THE MYSTERY FOOD

*Guess the Mystery Food* took place in August and was created by the Youth Advisory Group. Volunteer Julia, 14, put together the event from start to finish from choosing the food combinations on the menu to determining the structure for a 10-service “meal,” to creating the answer sheets, rules, and points system for contestants. On the day, two teens and two younger students volunteered with Julia leading, preparing food, serving contestants, and generally adding to the fun atmosphere.

## TEEN COMICS AND NONFICTION FIND A HOME

The continued efforts to create a unique space for teens continued in 2022. Teen collections, including comics and manga, were moved onto the shelves in the youth department's teen zone and effectively became a cohesive part of the teen collection. Teen non-fiction was also moved. This teen-focused, curated collection has both helped highlight the teen non-fiction and made it easier for teens and parents to find the subjects that are most important to modern teenagers, from mental health to self-esteem to autobiography.



# VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Adult Volunteers were finally able to return to the library in 2022. Most notable was their contribution to the Home Library Service whereby a group of dedicated volunteers delivered books and other library materials to homebound library members. Another important way volunteers contributed in 2022 was at the Annual Book Sale which had been on hiatus since the beginning of the pandemic.

### Annual Book Sale

On October 22 and 23 the Library held its first book sale since fall 2019. The sale was a huge success, and we received many positive comments concerning the quality and organization of the sale. The sale consisted almost exclusively of donations that we received during the pandemic and generated \$3077 for the library. The sale could not be possible with-

out the help of many volunteers. Myra Dodick, Bev Rath, Sara Salsabili, Ace Cote, Elaheh Vaziri, Noam Mechaly, Nicky Fridman, Carol Rabinovitch, Anne Edwards, and Rosanne Abramson all helped organize the event. We also had the help of some teen volunteers; Thomas Xue, Diana Segura Perez, Julia Xing and Dina Mohammadpour.

## TEEN VOLUNTEERS



The goal of building community for teens and allowing them to grow their social skills came to fruition last summer through the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) summer programs (Summer Reading Club Ambassadors and Monarch Gardeners). The YAG has given teens, many of whom were stuck at home this summer, something engaging and meaningful to do. This was one of the strongest volunteering teams; some teens put in dozens of hours over the summer, showing the true need for volunteer opportunities.

## VOLUNTEER DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

### Tech Drop-In

On September 13, the Library relaunched Tech Drop-In with Doug Roseman, the first time since the beginning of the pandemic. Doug's drop-in has proven to be very popular helping seniors navigate the mysteries of their various technology devices.

### Learn to Draw Manga with Ayame Rocks

On Saturday, July 16, 13 children joined teen artist and YAG/Culture Committee volunteer Anna for a workshop about drawing manga. Anna showed participants how to draw a face well as a body, addressed proportion and style in manga art, and gave participants feedback and drawing tips.





# THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

## CLOUDLIBRARY



In 2022, the Library, along with its three partner libraries, decided to disband its small consortium and move to CloudLibrary, an alternative to OverDrive/Libby. One major advantage is the ability to seamlessly share collections with our neighbouring libraries (6 libraries now subscribe to CloudLibrary) while prioritizing our content for Côte Saint-Luc Library patrons. Promotion material was created to advise the public and instructions on how to use the new service were posted on the library website. Throughout the Fall, the Library received many requests for help transitioning to the new service which were successfully met by our technology-savvy Reference Team.

## A NEW LIBRARY SOFTWARE

In 2021, Council approved the Library's recommendation to discontinue its long-standing relationship with Innovative Interfaces, Inc., and acquire a new library software from the vendor Axiell, previously known as Infor. V-Smart is used by other demerged city libraries including Westmount, Dorval and Dollard-des-Ormeaux and will save the city valued tax dollars in annual maintenance fees. The soft-

ware is responsible for managing all of library circulation transactions as well as the library member and library materials databases. It also includes an acquisitions module which will help track book and audiovisual purchases as well as an integrated website and OPAC. The implementation process began in June and on December 1 the Library launched the new system.

## PC RESERVATION AND PRINT MANAGEMENT

A new PC reservation and print management system was launched in March which featured several new options that improved the overall experience for patrons. Patrons can now walk-up and reserve the station of their choice, reserve twice in a day for a total of two 60-minute sessions, and have their sessions extended automatically. Included are new staff web

portals which enable the library staff to assist patrons from any service point. Finally, the Library was now able to offer wireless printing! This exciting new service allowed patrons to send their print jobs to the library from their devices while on site or even from their personal computer at home.



# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

## NEWCOMERS

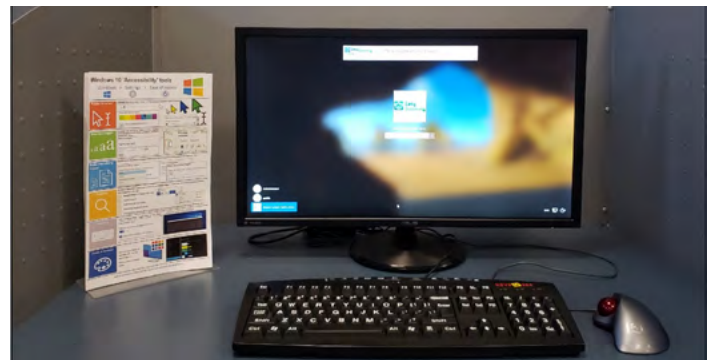
One of the Library's priorities is to welcome and facilitate the integration of newcomers. 2022 saw the development and re-organization of the library webpage that is dedicated to newcomers to Canada making information regarding citizenship, careers, and language resources more easily accessible. In addition, the Library created a Citizenship resources pamphlet and made available a variety of publications including the *Discover Canada* booklets (English and French), as well as the *Welcome to Canada: What you should know* booklets (English and French). Finally, the Library began a subscription to a weekly magazine in Farsi called *Hafteh*. The publisher has kindly given the Library 10 free copies a week which are available on our Take-It-Rack.



## ACCESSIBILITY

In order to meet one of the Library's objectives in the *City's Action Plan for the Disabled Community*, the Library has created an Accessibility webpage outlining the many services that the library offers. This includes special collections, services, equipment, and facilities.

In addition, the Library set up a dedicated accessible computer station in the Media Lab. It is equipped with a large screen monitor, track ball mouse and large type keyboard to better serve patrons with low



vision. With a large open footprint surrounding it, patrons with reduced mobility will also have no trouble accessing it. A poster was also created (in both English and French) outlining the accessibility features that are freely available on all computers in the Media Lab.



# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

## Fine Free

As of September 1, the Library went fine free, joining many other libraries in Quebec and Canada in the fine free movement. Overdue fines are often a deterrent and patrons often do not return if they accumulate fines on their account. The unfortunate result is that opportunities for further engagement are lost. Fines remain for New Arrivals, Fast Reads, Quick Flicks, Interlibrary Loans and devices.

## PROGRAMMING

### Black History Month

In February, Librarian Steven Tomlinson prepared a podcast about Sidney Poitier to celebrate Black History Month. The Library also reached out to musicologist Craig Morrison who created an original presentation for the library highlighting the history of Motown.

### International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

On May 17, the Library showed the film *A Fantastic Woman* honouring the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.

### Truth and Reconciliation Day

In order to mark Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30, the Library hosted a virtual exhibit talk and workshop in collaboration with the McCord Stewart Museum entitled *Indigenous Voices of Today: Knowledge, Trauma, Resilience*. The exhibition gave witness to the still unrecognized knowledge of Indigenous peoples in Quebec and Canada as well as the deep wounds they carry.

### Holocaust Remembrance Day

On January 26, 84 people attended the virtual interview by Councillor Mike Cohen featuring Holocaust survivor, Pinchas Blitt about his memoir *A Promise of Sweet Tea*. The book is the 120<sup>th</sup> in the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoir Program, a project undertaken with little fanfare but monumental results by Naomi Azrieli, her late father, David Azrieli, and their venerated Canadian foundation.



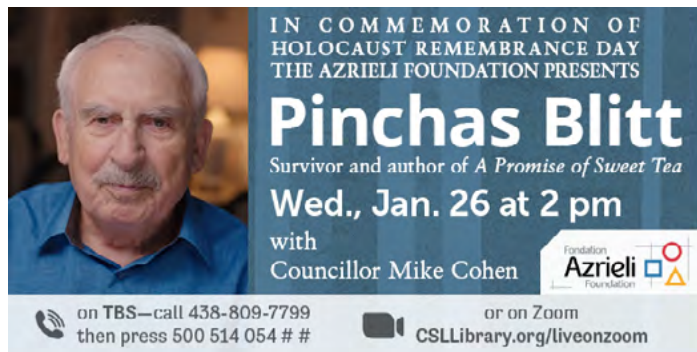
**Let's Talk Movies**  
with Film Librarian Steven Tomlinson  
SIDNEY POITIER  
Actor, Activist & Icon  
Wed., Feb. 16 at 2 pm  
Free.  
audio only presentation  
on TBS—call 438-809-7799 then press 500 514 054 # #  
or on Zoom  
csllibrary.org/liveonzoom



**IN-PERSON FILM SCREENING**  
In Honour of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia  
**A FANTASTIC WOMAN**  
(2018) directed by Sebastián Lelio about Marina, a trans woman, who is grieving the death of her partner.  
Free. Registration and procedural mask required.  
REGISTRATION  
csllibrary.libca.com/event/3671335  
Tuesday, May 17  
at 2 pm  
Harold Greenspon Auditorium



**VIRTUAL EXHIBIT TALK AND WORKSHOP**  
MCCORD STEWART MUSEUM  
**INDIGENOUS VOICES OF TODAY** KNOWLEDGE, TRAUMA, RESILIENCE  
Friday, Sept. 30 at 2 pm  
on Zoom  
Free. Registration and library membership required.  
Register at  
csllibrary.libca.com/event/3682713



**IN COMMEMORATION OF HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY THE AZRIELI FOUNDATION PRESENTS**  
**Pinchas Blitt**  
Survivor and author of *A Promise of Sweet Tea*  
Wed., Jan. 26 at 2 pm  
with  
Councillor Mike Cohen  
Foundation Azrieli  
on TBS—call 438-809-7799 then press 500 514 054 # #  
or on Zoom  
CSLLibrary.org/liveonzoom

# REFERENCE AND RESEARCH

## REFERENCE



The Reference Department plays an important role within the Côte Saint-Luc community and is known for its high standard of service and commitment to its residents. The Reference Desk re-opened to serving the public in person in February. Patrons commented that it was so nice to come back to see us. Many came by the desk just to say hello and to let us know that our work is appreciated. The Collaborative Space also reopened to students.

As with most public libraries, questions tend to cover a wide range of topics from educational to information and research as well as reader's advisory and technology or digital resource help. The reference staff answered a total of 21,077 questions from patrons in 2022.

Some standout and noteworthy customer service moments from this year:

A handwritten note given to Jennifer Srouji by a patron contained this nice message:

*Jennifer—Always happy to see you at your desk! Thanks for all your help, with books, my iPhone, and especially for just being you—kind and sweet. Sincerely, Jacqueline*

After submitting a purchase suggestion on her behalf, a patron said the following to our newest librarian Hannah Bartels:

**// Where would we be without our library? //**

After helping an elderly patron with a particularly big stack of papers to photocopy, Jennifer Srouji was told:

**// This is why I come to this library, you're all so great. //**

She was so grateful she came back with a flowering plant.

## RESEARCH

Many internal and external research questions were asked this year relating to the city and its history. A patron was looking for original photos of the Davis YM-YWHA branch on Kellert Avenue in Côte Saint-Luc. Librarian Taleen Aktorosian shared some photos of the re-dedication ceremony of 1979 from the city's archives and let him know that the Jewish Public Library also has some photos in their catalog.

The Reference team researched and put together several newspaper articles from the founding and closing of the Blossom Pool. On September 1, the city had a reunion for all the families who had attended the pool.





# LIBRARY SPACES

## CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

As health regulations relaxed, several popular services and items were brought back into use, including toys, board games, and movie-watching stations.

### Early Learning Area

The early learning corner has become a bustling gathering place for families with young children, where children play imaginative games together and look at books in the crocodile. Word about the toddler area and LEGO wall have spread, and the team is seeing many new young families visiting regularly and discovering the library in the process. The Library added some new toys in 2022, including a train table and train set, imaginary play toys, a fine motor skill-developing busy board, as well as a sensory panel and a logic panel.



### New Section for Magazines

Youth magazines can now all circulate and have their own home next to the comics. Since the magazines have been in their new location, circulation has noticeably gone up and the team has had to replenish the rack with more back issues.

### New and Improved Lounge

The first lounge, which used to be known as the Audio-visual Lounge, was in desperate need of a facelift containing furniture that had become shabby and dated and equipment that was no longer in use. In an attempt to create a new look and vocation, the library team settled on a business casual feel where patrons can work alone or in a group in a comfortable and relaxed setting.

### Children's Mural

In preparation for the Children's Library inauguration, a vinyl mural was installed over the children's computers. It resembles the pixelated images of an older-style computer game. It is very cute and suits the space.

## VIRTUAL SPACES

### Library Website

Spaces come in many different forms including both physical as well as those that are virtual. The library website continues to play an important role in keeping residents informed.

The Library launched a new website on December 1. The homepage has the same elements as before but displays differently for easier access to information, programs and services. The new website also features an integrated online catalogue with robust search limits and options to create Reading Lists and Interest Lists. Overall, the new website flows better and makes better use of screen space, allowing the library to highlight certain items that were previously hidden. In addition, in order to protect patron's personal information, the need to enter a PIN number was implemented.



## COMMITTED TO LIFELONG LEARNING

The Library has always had a long tradition of providing programming that develops lifelong learning skills. These range from language groups like *Spanish Conversation* and *Discu-thé* (French conversation) to *Science Demystified* with Dr. Joe Schwarcz and *In the Headlines* with Hershey Dvoskin.

### DISCU-THÉ

Our *Discu-thé* French conversation group was held virtually during the Winter and Fall of 2022. Librarian Taleen Aktorosian gave a total of 11 sessions this year. Each session focused on a different topic including holidays, travel and family.



### SPANISH CONVERSATION

During the year, two Spanish classes were given by librarian Maria Luisa Morales. The first session was held from May to June while the second took place from October to November. Both were offered via Zoom. Every week, Maria taught practical conversation skills for real, easy communication and reinforced the use of the learned vocabulary and structures by oral practice during the class.



### IPAD FOR BEGINNERS

In the month of September, the Library offered a beginner's iPad course with librarian Taleen Aktorosian. During this 5-week period, participants learned how to navigate their iPads, access settings and connect to WiFi, send and reply to emails, browse the internet through Safari, and take and manage photos and videos on their device. On the last class, participants received a certificate of achievement for having completed the course. We received positive feedback and many participants mentioned that they would like to see more of these courses offered in the future.





# LEARNING IS FUN AT THE LIBRARY

## CHILDREN'S STEAM PROGRAMS

From astronomy to butterflies, to chemistry to crafting and gaming, the Library continued its tradition of providing STEAM experiences for all ages. The Youth team's goal of making learning fun and inspiring was brought back to in-person events this year with Spring Break Online in February being the final virtual program offered. Activity kits were given to all 71 participants. The four virtual STEAM programs were full, and the majority were led by teen volunteers Anna and Prousha, with guidance from the team.

A Word from Participants:

Maryam O. (participant):

**"This was the best week of my life!"**

Lynn F. (parent):

**"I just wanted to let you know Sophie loved the classes during spring break. Thank you for organizing them for the kids. It's a gift to be able to have this beautiful library nearby! And of course the staff!"**



Standout in-person programs included *Discover Astronomy with Plateau Astro*, *Imagicario*, a giant puppet demonstration, *Giant Games* led by Bronwen Cathey and Teen Volunteers, *Summer Reading Club Crafternoons* led by the team, *The Magic of Chemistry* with McGill Chemistry Outreach, *Glow-in-the-Dark Art*, and *Trapped in the Library Escape Room Challenge*.

### Magic of Chemistry

On November 20, 25 children participated in a STEAM activity with the McGill Outreach Group. The budding scientists tested out multiple magical experiments that showcased the wonder and amazement of chemistry. This free program encourages a love of science, learning, discovery, and exploration.

### Glow in the Dark Art

On Sunday, November 6, 30 children participated in *Glow in the Dark Art*. The lights in the Multipurpose room were turned off, and children used black lights to explore different kinds of glow-in-the-dark paint.



The kids had a lot of fun watching their neon masterpieces light up as they brought them closer to the black lights. The program was so popular and the Library had enough extra supplies that other children from the waiting list were able to join in at the end to make a souvenir star.

### Trapped in the Library: Escape Room Challenge

Escape Rooms provide brain-teasing puzzles that challenge children's logic, patterning, and problem-solving skills. Using tools from the extensive BreakoutEdu library, library staff led the Escape Room and volunteers made decorations which were then hung in the auditorium to make the dino theme come to life. Children successfully "broke out" and at the end were excited to give suggestions for a future escape room.

# LEARNING IS FUN AT THE LIBRARY

## EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

The return of baby and toddler programming after a COVID-related hiatus has garnered many new memberships for the library.

### La La Lesley

La La Lesley was brought on to lead the baby program, now called Rhyme and Music with La La Lesley. Parents and babies alike seem to love the program, saying things like, “You kept my baby transfixed the whole time!” Lesley uses colourful props, costumes, instruments, and bubbles to engage babies and their caregivers in familiar songs and foster early language development. This is a great fit for babies; they are not old enough for a full storytime, but they benefit from bright colours, large images, songs, and rhymes. Lesley, as a specialist in early childhood education, is a great fit for the Library as well.



## ADULT PROGRAMS

### Virtual Cooking Passover Workshop

On April 5, three desserts were showcased including the ever popular “matza crack”— matza with delicious toppings alongside melted chocolate. Ksenia Prints is the author of the cookbook *At the Immigrant’s Table* and runs a popular food blog and food photography business of the same name. Her recipes were inspired by Eastern European as well as Latin American Jewish cuisine and offered alternatives for vegans, vegetarians and even gluten free recipes.

A promotional graphic for an interactive virtual Passover cooking workshop. The graphic features a photo of Ksenia Prints, a stack of matza crack, and text detailing the event. The text includes the title 'INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL PASSOVER COOKING WORKSHOP with Ksenia Prints', the subtitle 'THREE EASY PASSOVER DESSERTS', the date and time 'Tue., April 5 at 2 pm', and the viewing options: 'on TBS—call 438-809-7799 then press 500 514 054 # #' and 'or on Zoom csllibrary.org/liveonzoom'.



# A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

## MUSIC

Despite a rainy summer, the Library was able to finally bring outdoor concerts back to the community in Pierre Elliot Trudeau Park, as well as in Ashkelon Gardens. With each concert bringing in approximately 350 people, more than a thousand people came out to enjoy the music.

### **Ensemble La Cigale: *La Grazia Delle Donne***

A classical music concert by Ensemble La Cigale took place on May 12 and was the first concert held since the beginning of the pandemic. Presented in collaboration with Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée, it was originally intended to take place in 2020, but ended up being postponed repeatedly due to COVID-19. The musicians performed works by Caccini, Vivaldi, Aleotti, Leonarda and Strozzi. Those who attended the concert were very happy to see a sign of moving toward normalcy.



### **EMDE: *Mandingo Blues***

The first of the planned outdoor summer concerts, featuring African music artist Mamoutou Dembélé (also known as EMDE), took place indoors due to inclement weather on June 29. EMDE, a native of Sikasso, Mali, sings in the Bwa and Bambara languages while playing a variety of traditional instruments. He also creates his own instruments, including a 15-string bahouinou. The audience was energetic, with families, regulars, and new faces all dancing and having a great time. Some attendees stayed after the show to take a closer look at EMDE's handmade instruments and thank him and the other musicians for a great performance.



### **Vintage Wine: *Rocking Songs from the 1950s to 1970s***

Vintage Wine returned to perform in Trudeau Park on July 20, filling the park with songs from the 1950s and 1970s. People brought chairs and blankets and sang along to familiar songs. There was also a good deal of dancing. The show ended with a sudden rain shower, followed by a beautiful rainbow to add wonder to the finale.



## A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

### Musicians of the World Symphony Orchestra: *Symphony in the Garden*

Under the direction of Joseph Milo, the orchestra's garden concert on August 14 featured two soloists, Olivia Charette Hancinsky (soprano) and Istvan Lakatos (violin). The more than 40 musicians formally dressed in black offered attendees an impressive looking and sounding summer afternoon concert. The orchestra performed well-known pieces by Strauss, Bizet, Puccini, Brahms, Mozart, Gershwin, Monti, Bernstein, and Ravel to an appreciative crowd.

### Musica Camerata: *An Autumn Serenade*

This chamber music ensemble is one of the most renowned in Canada, celebrating its 53rd season and boasting a repertoire of over 350 works spanning from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The concert on September 11 consisted of 8 pieces by classical composers such as Elgar, Beethoven, and Smetana. The performance was met with a standing ovation.

## PERFORMANCES



### Repercussion Theatre: *Shakespeare-in-the-Park*

*Shakespeare-in-the-Park* returned to Côte Saint-Luc on July 28, having rehearsed in Trudeau Park throughout the summer. The performance of *All Shall Be Well* took place in Ashkelon Gardens with a performance focused on the many instances of plagues and pandemics in Shakespeare's plays. It was an exciting and clever original show, greatly appreciated by the audience.

### YidLife Crisis: *A Closer Luc*

On August 17, 240 people attended YidLife Crisis' sold performance entitled *A Closer Luc*. There were 160 attendees in the Harold Greenspon Auditorium with another 80 attending through a livestream option. Jaime Elman and Eli Batalion presented a hilarious and well-researched multi-media variety show both commenting on the history and the key figures of Côte Saint-Luc, as well as paying tribute

to their own local upbringing. The performance acted both as an ode and a parody of the unique elements of Côte Saint-Luc life in the past and pres-



ent. The production was the result of a prize offered by the Conseil des Arts de Montréal.

### Virtual Exhibit Talk from the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, in partnership with the Philharmonie de Paris, presented via Zoom an exciting new exhibit showcasing the work of New York artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. This exhibition provided a unique look at how music influenced Basquiat's career, showcasing his paintings and featuring archive extracts of his musical performances with the experimental group Gray and other musicians who inspired him. The show offered a glimpse into the New York of the 70s and 80s, when Basquiat was at the height of his career.



## EXHIBITS

### Progressive Bonsai Exhibit

On October 23, the Library held its third annual Bonsai exhibit in conjunction with the Progressive Bonsai Collective. The exhibit ran for one day only and consisted of 25 Bonsai trees of different origins and backgrounds. All the trees' curators were on hand to answer any questions from the public.

### Shushana Caplan

In honour of Jewish Heritage month in May, artist Shushana Caplan was invited to exhibit her autobiographical artworks titled *Raizel's Journey*. The exhibit told her family history during the Holocaust through the use of photographs that her parents and grandparents carried with them throughout the war.

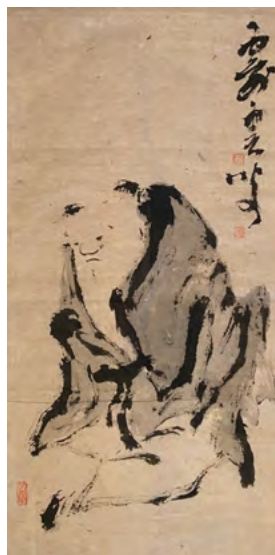
The exhibit was scheduled from May 5 through June 5 but due to its immense popularity was extended until July 13.

### Garfield Morgan

On July 19, an exhibit titled *Creating Space* by artist Garfield Morgan was hung in the Art Gallery. Garfield is a Jamaican multidisciplinary artist and often uses found or upcycled objects and material to complete his pieces. Garfield's exhibit ran until September 20.

### Yunxiang Jiang

On October 27, the Library presented traditional Chinese artist Yunxiang Jiang. Yunxiang is a very well-known artist in China and has been widely collected by Chinese galleries and museums. He takes a contemporary approach to very traditional Chinese techniques in calligraphy, ink painting, and pottery. In 2004, Yunxiang was commissioned by the Chinese government to create a commemorative pot celebrating what would have been, former president, Deng Xiaoping's, 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

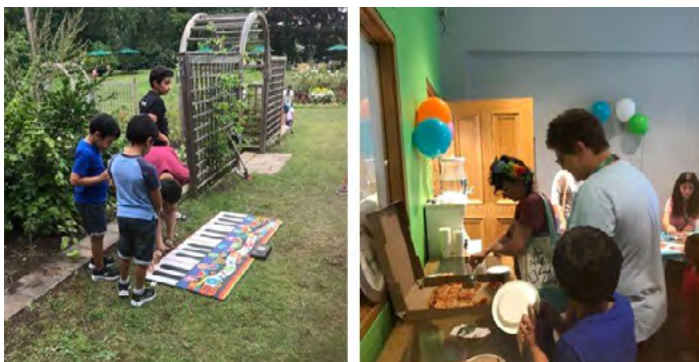


(top to bottom) Shushana Caplan, Garfield Morgan, Yunxiang Jiang

# FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

The Reference Desk staff as well the staff at the Children's Service Point continued to provide excellent reader's advisory services to patrons of all ages throughout the year. Serving a community of avid readers, the Library strives to provide a well-rounded collection that is interesting and engaging. The mission of the dedicated library staff has always been that no one leaves empty handed!

## LITERACY PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN



### TD Summer Reading Club 2022

On Thursday, August 18, the Library hosted the closing party for the TD Summer Reading Club, which is an annual program aimed at encouraging children, teens, and families to read and learn at their own pace over the summer. This year, 176 members participated in the program, and the party celebrated their reading achievements.

During the event, participants had the opportunity to win various exciting prizes. The biggest reader in the 0 to 5 years old category received four tickets to the Ecomuseum, while the biggest reader in the 6 to 12 years old category won five tickets to the newly redesigned Insectarium. The biggest reader in the teen category won a Kobo Nia e-reader, and runners-up in all three categories received second and third prizes of \$50 at Babar and \$20 at TCBY, respectively. Additionally, local businesses provided door prizes and the Library gave away books for readers of all ages, as well as small gift bags containing stickers, funky pencils, and a reading certificate.



Twelve teens volunteered to help set up the party, including decorating, setting up games, and practicing face painting, which was the most popular activity at the party. Coady Sidley led a mini book-making workshop during the event. The Library showed its support for young readers through the prizes and giveaways, and the party provided a fun way to celebrate the participants' reading accomplishments.

### Star Wars Storytime

On Sunday, June 26, 22 kids attended Star Wars Storytime and met Darth Vader himself (Alisa Soukhodolskaia). After taking pictures with all the kids, Darth Vader read several stories, followed by a make-your-own lightsaber craft.

### Pajama Storytime with Teddy and Galit

On November 17, local author Galit Preisler visited the Library for a very special Pajama Storytime. She brought her dog Teddy, the main character in her new board book, *Teddy's World*. She read to 10 children, who came dressed in their PJs and with their favourite stuffed animals.





# FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

## LITERARY PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS

### Canada Reads

On March 9, 54 people attended the 2022 Canada Reads Debate, Côte Saint-Luc Edition. Five librarians battled it out to defend their chosen books from the CBC Canada Reads shortlist. The event took place on Zoom with Lisa Milner as the host and moderator, asking each librarian about how their book fit the theme of “Connecting us all”.

The books on the shortlist were the following:

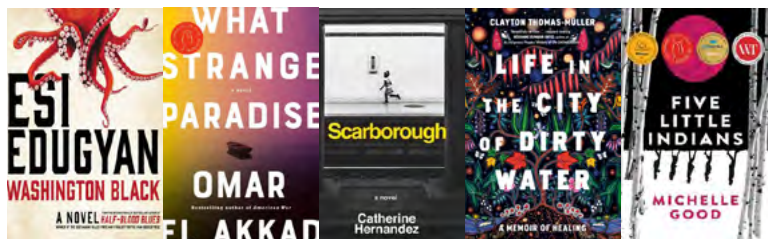
*Washington Black* by Esi Edugyan, championed by Antonella Lalli

*What Strange Paradise* by Omar El Akkad, championed by Maria Ressina

*Scarborough* by Catherine Hernandez, championed by Maria Morales

*Life in the City of Dirty Water* by Clayton Thomas-Müller, championed by Jennifer Eisman

*Five Little Indians* by Michelle Good, championed by Mearaid Stevenson



In the end, the audience voted Mearaid’s defense of *Five Little Indians* by Michelle Good the winning title, with Maria Morales’ defence of *Scarborough* as a close second.

### Author Event Highlights



Book Launch with Roksana Bahramitash, sponsored by the Writers Union of Canada.



Gina Roitman presented her latest novel, *Don't Ask*.



Book launch of *Montreal Street Art And Me* with Archie Fineberg.



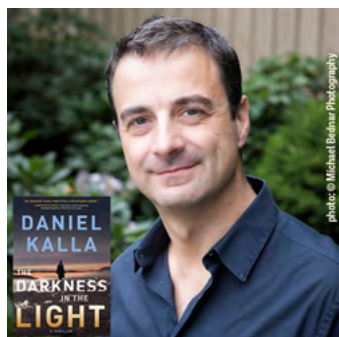
Virtual program entitled *Rencontre virtuelle avec Marc Levy* presented in collaboration with the demerged cities of the island of Montreal and in the context of Public Libraries’ Week.

# FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

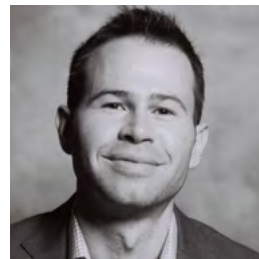


Virtual book launch of *I Want You To Be Free* with author S. Nadja Zajdman, in collaboration with the Montreal Holocaust Museum and Hobart Books

Interviews with bestselling authors including Rebecca Serle, author of *One Italian Summer*, Heather O’Neill, author of *When We Lost our Heads*, Genevieve Graham, author of *Bluebird*, Monica Ali, author of *Love Marriage*, Daniel Kalla, author of *Darkness in the Light*.



Councillor Mike Cohen’s interviews with local authors including Tara Schwartz, author of *Can’t Help Falling*, Monique Pollak, author of *The Brass Charm*, Andrew Stobo Sniderman and Douglas Sanderson about their book *Valley of the Birdtail: An Indian Reserve, A White Town, And the Road to Reconciliation*, Danny Gallagher, author and Steve Naymark, contributor, about *Bases Loaded: Inside stories about Eli, Cro, Cy, Terminator and the Expos*.



(clockwise from top left) Tara Schwartz, Monique Pollak, Andrew Stobo Sniderman and Douglas Sanderson



## REACHING OUT

### SPVM—DOOR-TO-DOOR VISITING AN ISOLATED SENIOR PROGRAM

In May and June of 2022, the Library assisted for the first time with the SPVM's yearly program of going door-to-door, visiting isolated seniors and making them more aware of community and SPVM resources available to them. The team of 4, including the Library's Senior Services Coordinator Katie Bezaire, visited 4 buildings in the city and spoke with over 100 senior residents.

### CÔTE SAINT-LUC WOMEN'S CLUB—VIRTUAL BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP AND IPAD CLASSES

#### Virtual Book Discussion Group

Katie Bezaire has continued holding monthly virtual Book Discussion Groups with a dedicated group of Women's Club members in 2022. In September she began recording the sessions and uploading them to the Library's YouTube channel to promote accessibility for members otherwise unable to attend.

#### iPad Classes

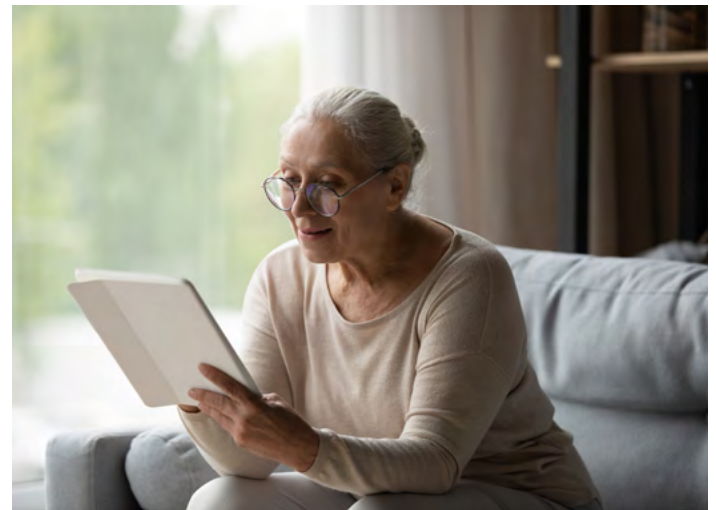
When the Women's Club began offering iPad classes to their members at the end of August, they requested support from the library to help facilitate the program. Taleen Aktorosian and Katie Bezaire were happy to accommodate, continuing through until the end of the year.

### BOOK CLUBS AT THE B'NAI BRITH HOUSE AND CHATEAU

After more than a year of discussions with former director Eileen Katz and Chateau resident Shauna Kelly about book clubs, the Library began animating book discussion groups at both the House and the Chateau in December 2022, with more than 30 residents from both establishments attending. The Book Clubs are scheduled to continue throughout 2023.

### POETRY WORKSHOPS

The Cummings Centre Drop-In Program resumed in-person programming at the Aquatic Centre in June of 2022. Previously, Katie Bezaire had been contributing selected poetry and commentary for their monthly Caregivers' Toolkit, and in August she resumed in-person workshops with the Friday group.



### TECHNOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE FOR HOMEBOUND PATRONS

With the Library's move to both a new digital lending platform (CloudLibrary) and a new OPAC (Iguana), some of our senior patrons required assistance during the transition. For those residents with mobility issues, Katie Bezaire brought technical assistance to them in their homes.

## REACHING OUT

### SCHOOLS VISIT THE LIBRARY (MERTON AND JPPS)

When the Children’s Library reopened, schools were searching for end-of-year activities for their youngest students. Several classes from JPPS and from Merton came to visit the Library. Merton was lucky enough to meet Merton Alum, Mayor Mitchell Brownstein!



### STORYTIMES AT FLETCHER PARK WITH THE STREET LAB MOBILE LIBRARY

In July, Alisa Soukhodolskaia and Coady Sidley travelled to Fletcher Park with the Street Lab furniture for the inaugural Fletcher Park Storytime. Twelve kids and their parents joined them and listened to *The Book with No Pictures* by B. J. Novak and other popular titles. Afterwards, the children learned how to make catapulting paper airplanes using a cut-out groove and an elastic band. The Street Lab furniture purchased with a bequest given by the late and beloved patron Cesia Rothbart, was very attractive and great for crafts following the stories.





## COME CELEBRATE WITH US

### MAX MARGLES CHILDREN'S LIBRARY INAUGURATION

In September of 2022, the Max Margles Children's Library was inaugurated, thanks to a generous \$500,000 donation from Mrs. Roslyn Margles in honor of her late husband, Max. The inauguration took place on Sunday, September 18, and was attended by many notable figures, including Mayor Mitchell Brownstein, members of the CSL council, Library Director Janine West, Rabbi Asher Jacobson of Congregation Chevra Kadisha B'nai Jacob Beth Hazikaron—Beth Hillel, former Mayors Anthony Housefather and Robert Libman, and Rachel McCrum of the Quebec Writers' Federation. The donation was dedicated to promoting literacy

for children and young adults, including the establishment of a children's writing contest to be named the Roslyn and Max Margles Literacy Contest.

The dedication ceremony was held outdoors. The attendees then proceeded inside for the ribbon-cutting in front of the library entrance. Mrs. Margles and some children stamped the first books with the new "Max Margles Children's Library" stamp. A boxed breakfast was given to invited guests, consisting of a delicious meal catered by Pizza Pita, which included bagels, lox and cream cheese, a Danish, and fruit salad. Coffee, tea, and juice were served as well. Edgewood provided beautiful flowers to decorate the table, including a bouquet for Mrs. Margles, and Giggles provided four balloon bouquets to add to the festive



atmosphere. The Library opened at 10 am, and to add to the celebration, Louna provided face-painters and an animal balloon maker for the enjoyment of the children.

Festive activities included button-making and decorating bookmarks, TCBY, a story time followed by the grand finale, a magic show with the Amazing Todsky. The show was met with great enthusiasm. Bronwen had organized teen volunteers to help prepare the breakfast bags, greet and direct guests and run the craft activities. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

# COME CELEBRATE WITH US

## HALLOWEEN PARTY

On Sunday, October 30, nearly 200 people joined the team, Louna Face Painting, and Belle from Beauty and the Beast for a Halloween experience at the Library.



The festivities kicked off at 10 am with the arrival of costumed children who were treated to a range of activities, including face painting, a pumpkin hunt, and the chance to create their own Max Margles Children's Library bookmark or button. The highlight of the morning was undoubtedly Belle's Storytime, which drew in a crowd of over 60 enthusiastic listeners. The event drew to a close at noon with the announcement of the winner of the \$25 Babar gift certificate.

The event served as a shining example of the strong partnership between the Library and Recreation, with a cross-promotional effort which created a day of celebration that showcased a range of exciting activities across the city. This approach proved highly effective in encouraging participation and enabling residents to experience the full breadth of the day's festivities, without feeling as though they had to choose between events.

## FESTILOU STORYTELLING FESTIVAL

The CSL Library participated in this year's Festilou Storytelling Festival and hosted storyteller Selina Eisenberg on Sunday, May 22 in the Ashkelon Gardens. 55 people attended the event.

