

Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Prepared by Janine West, Director

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



In Côte Saint-Luc, everyone contributes to making our city a wonderful place to be—its elected officials, our friendly staff, and members of the community. Our public library was founded in 1966 and remains a hub for community gatherings and growth. Under the guidance of Director Janine West, the public library is always striving to meet the needs of our residents.

This year's annual report showcases the library's standout programs and services from 2023, and they're truly impressive. From traditional book talks and story times to cultural events featuring world-class music and art, as well as innovative STEAM programs for children and volunteer opportunities for teens, the public library continues to be a vital part of Côte Saint-Luc life.

With its unmatched opening hours, the library is always ready for a visit—whether you want to cozy up by the fireplace with a newspaper or share the joy of reading with your children. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the public library's many offerings, both online and in person. You won't be disappointed; there are wonderful staff, inviting spaces, and a wealth of resources waiting to be discovered.

Lastly, a big thank you to the public library staff for their dedication and commitment. Your creativity, responsiveness, and desire to make a difference in our residents' lives inspire us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitchell Brownstein". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mitchell Brownstein
Mayor





MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Reflecting on 2023, I feel enormous pride for what the Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library has accomplished in the past year. 2023 will be remembered as an important year for further aligning the library around core values such as access, inclusion, and service excellence, and for providing quality cultural and literacy programming for all ages.

As in previous years, much of 2023 was dedicated to reaching out, building and solidifying relationships with community and cultural organizations. The library partnered with the Jewish Public Library and the Montreal Holocaust Centre, and new programs, such as *Tenants' Rights* provided by LogisAction, were born from the new partnerships we created.

Youth programming soared in 2023, thanks in part to the donation from Roslyn Margles earmarked



to support children's programming. From sewing to Lego, the library continued its tradition of providing STEAM experiences for all ages, while two performances, *Les Illusionnistes* and *Perfect Storm* by Georgie Productions were added for children and families. Our dedicated CSL teen volunteers designed, developed and organized a large-scale community event, CSL Comic-Con. In addition, the donation from Mrs. Margles enabled the library to purchase a professional mobile stage, signifying its commitment to providing quality cultural programming for all. This stage will enhance the cultural experience for audiences for years to come.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our dedicated staff who work tirelessly to bring you the best, not only in developing and offering new and innovative library services and programs, but in delivering the brand of customer service that keeps you, our loyal public, coming back time and time again. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to serving you in the upcoming year.

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

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.

2023 | YEAR REVIEW

221,378

items checked out



27,466

digital items checked out



9,860

active members



1,531

Facebook followers

1,904

new members

334

Instagram followers



328

programs offered

8,326

program attendees



164,249

library visits

211,546

visits to our website



22,499

reference questions answered



26

tech training sessions

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

SOCIAL MISSION

SPVM Visits

Katie participated in the SPVM's initiative of visiting isolated seniors to make them aware of various community resources available to them.

The SPVM's door-to-door initiative took place May 29 and 30 at the King David Residence and St Patrick's Square. Both visits began with general meetings in the common rooms of the residences followed by door-to-door visits. Officers Andrew Iacovella and Marc Berthiaume along Katie met with over 70 residents.



Holiday Food Drive

In December, the library held a food drive to benefit a food baskets initiative at St. Richard's church.

As always, library members were generous with their donations. Several boxes of food were sent over.



Concert in Support of Ashkelon Musica Camerata: Hope and Harmony

On December 10, in partnership with the City of Côte Saint-Luc, the library hosted the renowned chamber music group **Musica Camerata**, featuring musicians **Berta Rosenohl** and **Luis Grinhauz**. Presenting a special selection of songs themed around Hope and Harmony at the Greenspon Auditorium, the charity concert aimed to support the children of Côte Saint-Luc's sister city, Ashkelon, recently affected



by terrorism. Contributions were collected both on-site and online via the city's website, contributing to Federation CJA's initiative for Israel. The event attracted fifty-two attendees and successfully raised \$420.10 at the entrance. The evening concluded with a tree lighting ceremony outside City Hall.

Care Calls

Membership in the city's Care Calls service remained steady in 2023. The service continues to make a difference in our seniors' lives, particularly to those who have little or no family living in Côte Saint-Luc, while offering peace of mind to their family members.

In November, Anoma Abeyratne became the service's first volunteer caller and marked the beginning of the transition of the service to becoming volunteer based.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND COLLABORATIONS

Montreal Holocaust Museum: Fishel Goldig

On April 9, Holocaust survivor **Fishel Goldig** shared the story of how he and his family escaped Nazi persecution during the war. Fishel described the tragedies of his childhood experiences in Ukraine, hauntingly illustrated on a PowerPoint, with simple but moving imagery. After the presentation, **Mr. Joseph Milo**, conductor of the **Musicians of the World Orchestra**, performed Jewish songs on the piano, evoking the strength of Jewish resilience and audience members sang along to the familiar songs. Sarah Fogg from the Montreal Holocaust Museum was in attendance as our partner, as were students from the Jewish Public Library archives.

LogisAction: Tenants' Rights

On August 23, 20 people attended a workshop on *Tenants' Rights* led by **Felicia Rotaru** from **LogisAction**.

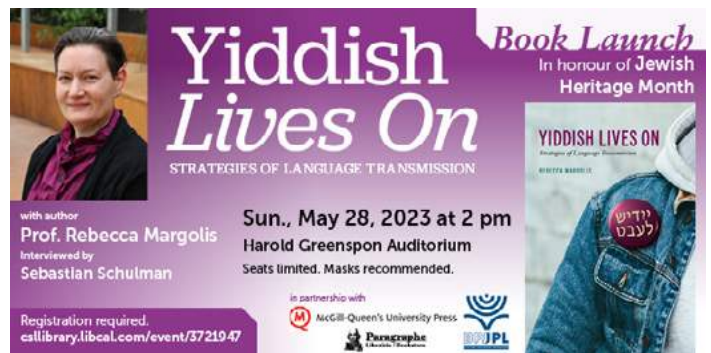
This workshop focused on the many pain points of apartment living, looking at laws surrounding leases and important clauses around the rights and responsibilities for both tenants and landlords. Attendees were able to voice many questions and concerns.

Jewish Public Library, McGill-Queen's University Press, and Paragraphe Bookstore: Yiddish Lives On with Professor Rebecca Margolis

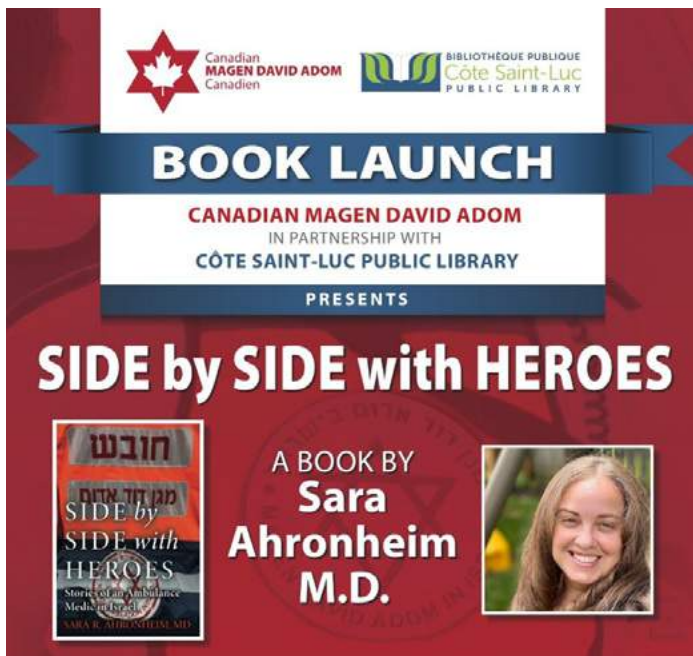
On May 28, the library hosted a book launch featuring *Yiddish Lives On* by **Professor Rebecca Margolis** in partnership with the Jewish Public Library, McGill-Queen's University Press, and Paragraphe Bookstore. This event was held to mark Jewish Heritage Month. Twenty-two books were sold and light refreshments were served.

Jewish Public Library: Beading with Alana

On November 12, the library welcomed local Mohawk artist **Alana Simon** for a workshop on traditional beading. Sixteen children between the ages of 8 and 14 joined Alana and Coady to create their own beaded bookmark or necklace. Participants also got to see a mini exhibit of some of Alana's ancestral beadwork. This program was offered in partnership with the Norman Berman Children's Library at the Jewish Public Library who helped with promotion and registration as well as cost.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION



Canadian Magen David Adom—Book Launch: Side by Side with Heroes by Sara Ahronheim M.D.

On February 13, 20 people attended the book launch of *Side by Side with Heroes* by **Sara Ahronheim M.D.** This was a partnership between the Côte Saint-Luc Public Library and Canadian Magen David Adom brought about with the help of Councillor Sidney Benizri. Dr. Ahronheim was presented with a certificate of appreciation after the event.

Paragraph Bookstore and Random House Canada: A Literary Afternoon with Ken Dryden, Roy MacGregor, and R. H. Thomson

This highly anticipated and very successful event was presented by Penguin Random House Canada in collaboration with Paragraphe Bookstore October 29 to 82 fans. A Q & A followed the three author presentations who each presented their new book, *The Class* by **Ken Dryden**, *Paper Trails* by **Roy MacGregor**, and *By the Ghost Light*, by **R. H. Thompson**.

Longtime library members and supporters Myra Dodick and Bev Rath volunteered at the ticket table.

Bonsai Exhibit

This year's Bonsai Exhibit took place in the Art Gallery on Sunday, October 22 from 11 am to 5 pm. This is the fourth year that the library has hosted a one-day only Bonsai exhibit organized by the **Progressive Bonsai Collective**. Headed by library patron Rafael Najmanovich, four of the members were on hand throughout the day to answer questions. This was a very popular show and attracted 200 visitors over the course of the 6-hour display.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

Italian Connections



In an ongoing effort to continue to reach out to the Italian community, the library presented the 1994 film *Il Postino* on February 22. The film was presented in Italian with English subtitles. Homemade biscotti, coffee, and tea were served, and Antonella led a post-film discussion. Many expressed that they would like to participate in more library programming of this nature.

On May 25, 11 people attended the hands-on program *Pasta Making Workshop with Pina*. **Giuseppina Petraccone**, owner of Pasta Casareccia and library member led participants in a hands-on and intense pasta-making workshop to create both Fettucine and Spaghetti using traditional pasta-making machines and a simple recipe of flour and eggs only. Antonella, Maria, and Angela assisted Pina so that all participants could take home a plate of tasty pasta to boil for supper.



Finally, on August 13, 600 people attended *Viva Italia!*, an outdoor concert presented by **Musicians of the World Symphony Orchestra**. Under the direction of **Joseph Milo**, the orchestra's Ashkelon Gardens concert featured the three soloists **Olivia Hancinsky-Charette** (soprano), **Benjamin Done** (tenor), and **Istvan Lakatos** (violin). The more than 40 musicians formally dressed in black offered attendees a delightful afternoon of some of the world's most beloved Italian songs, opera arias, and tenor and soprano duets.



BROADENING OUR SERVICES

CHESS FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS

Chess for youth as well as adults took off in 2023. While initially the youth program was run by chess teacher instructor and coach, **Alex Kapush, Boris Kolodny**, a world ranked player and pro, who began offering chess to adults at the beginning of 2023, offered to run both the adult and children's chess programs. Both programs are very popular and follow a drop in model.



SEWING

Coady provided several sewing workshops over the course of 2023 and participants had the unique opportunity to work with this experienced sewer and excellent teacher. Sewing skills not only stimulate creativity, but also encourage the sustainable and DIY ethos. Empowering children to learn how to use a sewing machine and hand-sew allows them to see that they can create or fix things themselves.



A PLACE FOR TEENS

There is plenty for teens to do in the library, particularly when it comes to getting involved. From *Comic-Con* to gardening for monarch butterflies, to *Reading Buddies* and assisting in *LEGO Club*, and *Chess Club*, and large children's events like *Harry Potter's Birthday* and Halloween, the volunteers made a large community impact. Volunteering is both rewarding and beneficial for teens; it allows them to build skills and confidence, while giving back to their community enabling them to earn community service hours for their school. It also provides a social outlet giving teens the opportunity to build relationships over time.

CSL COMIC-CON: A YOUTH-LED COMMUNITY EVENT

On July 9, over 100 people of all ages joined Bronwen, Maria, and a team of Youth Advisory Group volunteers for a community-led, Comic-Con-style event. The event was a celebration of local artists and shops, as well as comic/manga culture. With over 20 artists, vendors, and sponsors in attendance, the auditorium was transformed into a vibrant art and book fair which the public called "a great idea," "well-organized," and "fun."

The Côte Saint-Luc Library proved that it was indeed "A Place for Teens", a place where teens could have an opportunity to bring their own ideas to fruition developing their leadership and organizational skills along the way.



VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ANNUAL BOOK SALE

In 2023, the library held its fall book sale in October as part of Public Libraries' Week. This event raises funds which we set aside for special costly items that benefit library and its patrons. With the help of several dedicated volunteers, the library was able to mount this event once again. Special thanks to volunteer Carole Blank who does a herculean task sorting donations throughout the year. People find wonderful treasures and the start of the sale always sees a long line-up of people waiting for the doors to open. In 2023, the library raised \$2,803.65.



HOME LIBRARY SERVICES

While the residents with reduced mobility who are served by the Home Library Service (HLS) are primarily composed of older seniors, HLS also allows other, younger seniors, the opportunity to help their neighbours through volunteerism. For more than 12 years, HLS had a Thursday team of 3 volunteers, Golda, Issie, and Cyril who delivered books. In 2023,

this long-standing team of 3 friends retired from our volunteer deliverers, and we are so grateful to have benefitted from their service for so long!

In 2023 we circulated a total of 9,592 library items to seniors with mobility issues and made 2,926 visits.

VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

TAX CLINIC

The library hosted its 3rd annual *Tax Clinic*. In total, 7 sessions were held during the month of April, 65 appointments were booked, and tax returns were filed for 48 residents.

This service was able to help many in Côte Saint-Luc including single parents, families with young children, students, newly arrived immigrants, seniors, persons with disabilities, and caregivers. Many of those helped said they were extremely grateful for our service as most tax filing businesses charged more than they could afford.

This year's tax clinic could not have happened without the help of the 7 dedicated tax clinic volunteers who volunteered 104 hours not including the many hours of required training.

TECH DROP-IN WITH DOUG ROSEMAN

Now in its 7th year, *Tech Drop-in* is a very successful program run by our long-time volunteer **Doug Roseman**. Doug is open to any type of tech question and is a strong researcher if he doesn't know the answer off hand. He most often answers questions related to smartphones and tablets, the most common request being how to reset one's password. He has helped with setting up new laptops, initiating cloud storage, setting up face recognition, automatic updates, software troubleshooting, and even fax machine issues.

This program has helped hundreds of residents over the past few years and saved numerous hours of inquiries at the reference desk.

LIBRARY DONORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

DONATION IN HONOUR OF MEMBER GARY FAGEN

In 2023, the library celebrated a recently deceased long-time library member, **Gary Fagen**. His family wanted to honour his love and appreciation for Science Fiction and Fantasy literature, but more importantly recognize the impact that the library had on his life. To give thanks the family made a meaningful donation to the library which was used to update furniture in our magazine lounge. During a small reception on May 9, the library unveiled two plaques naming the *Gary Fagen Fantasy Collection* and the *Gary Fagen Science Fiction Collection*.



ADOPT-A-BOOK PROGRAM

Under the Adopt-a-Book program, each year many people think of the library when they wish to mark a significant occasion. One such person was **Gertie Berrys**. Over the years, she and her late husband Heinz made annual Adopt-a-Book donations to thank the library, often in recognition of the Home Library Service. Mrs. Berrys continued that tradition after his passing and would often remark that the library had been a lifeline for her. Sadly, she passed away in 2023 at age 100.

THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

SELF-CHECKOUT



In 2023, the library purchased and installed a new self-check kiosk. This new equipment also works seamlessly with our new integrated library software system, V-smart, allowing for smoother and quicker check-out and check-in procedures as well as the new RFID security system.

LAPTOP KIOSK

The new NetSpot laptop kiosk was purchased and installed in 2023. The station was purchased from *Stay Connected* and features 8 laptops that patrons can checkout and use throughout the library. The kiosk is connected to our previously installed iPad kiosk. Bluetooth capability has been enabled on both laptops and iPads.

The service will allow patrons to use digital equipment that they may not otherwise have access to without adding to staff tasks.



DIGITAL RESOURCES

A new digital resource was added to the library's collection, *Universalis*. *Universalis* is an online French encyclopedia that can be useful for both adults as well as younger patrons.



ONE EREAD/UN LIVREL CANADA

Throughout the month of April, the library participated in a pan-Canadian literary event called *One eRead/Un Livrel*, a digital and bilingual book club connecting readers to one another and to their libraries. The book chosen for 2023 was *Tatouine* by Jean-Christophe Réhel, or in French *Ce qu'on respire sur Tatouine*. The title was available for free with no restrictions on the library's digital reading platforms, including cloudLibrary, Hoopla, and Prêtnumérique.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

NEWCOMERS

English Conversation

The library recognizes that there are many newcomers arriving in Côte Saint-Luc whose first language is neither English nor French and are looking for informal discussion groups which will improve their fluency. The *Let's Talk! English Conversation* group met for the first time in April and continued through the month of May. In the fall, the program was led by library volunteer, **Jean Michaël** who offered to take over the program. Jean has years of experience teaching and every week he and the participants share ideas, discuss current events and a broad range of ideas to help improve daily English fluency. In the future Jean has also offered to hold a Let's Talk! to improve French fluency.

Multilingual Book Swap

In July 2023 the library was approached by member **Alexandre Ressine** who suggested a multilingual book swap. His suggestion led to the creation of a cart loaded with books of all languages, which people were free to take a book, with the understanding that they should help replenish the supply with books from their own collection. Newcomers welcomed this service acknowledging that it is often difficult to find books in their native language. Books to date have been in Russian, Turkish, Persian, Hebrew and Hindi.



ACCESSIBILITY

Hybrid Adult Programming

This year, the library with the assistance of the Communications Department upgraded the streaming technology in the Harold Greenspon Auditorium to allow for those who are unable to attend programming in person to participate in our vast array of programs. Two cameras were installed which zoom in on the speaker and the audience, enabling flexibility and superior quality, as well as higher recording quality.

Weekend Family Storytime

Kim, Olivia, and Bronwen created a structure for inclusive storytimes which instead of privileging some, helps to engage all. Creating routine, eliminating distraction, and allowing children to learn at their own pace and work together are the main tenets of these thoughtfully designed storytimes. Small but impactful changes include moving the storytime to the multipurpose room to eliminate distraction, conducting group projects which do not privilege fine motor coordination, adding finger crayons to the supplies offered, and using a regular opening and closing rhyme.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At Home Tech Help

Katie made a total of 31 home visits to help patrons with mobility issues with their devices in 2023. Access to technology allows people who have trouble getting around to connect with friends and family, to stay abreast of world events, and to escape in literature and other media. Home visits from a patient librarian both encourages social connectivity for residents and mitigates the embarrassment that many (especially older) residents feel about appearing inept to their family members.



PROGRAMMING

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

On May 17, 22 people attended a live screening of *Moonlight* to mark *International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia*.



Volunteer **Gayle Cohen** led the discussion, beginning with an explanation of the director's intent of putting his own story on the screen. While some attendees were uncomfortable discussing some of the scenes, Gayle encouraged attendees to engage with the material and to consider the cinematography, character portrayals, as well as the film's timelessness.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Marking *National Disability Employment Awareness Month*, October featured an exhibit by artist **Anastasia Demacheva**. Anastasia is a young artist with Down Syndrome who enjoys using a vivid style with bright colours to communicate her joyful vision of the world. Although she has engaged in various art forms including sculpting, painting, and animation, in recent years she has been focusing on painting and on transforming these paintings into animations. She has been studying under the wonderful Olga Maksimova who previously taught art at Recreation and who now works with children with Down Syndrome.



REFERENCE AND RESEARCH

REFERENCE

The Reference Department plays an important role within the Côte Saint-Luc community. Whether in person, or via phone or email, librarians are on hand to field questions from patrons of all ages. Questions tend to cover a wide range of topics from educational to information and research, as well as reader's advisory and technology help. The reference staff answered a total of **24,454** questions from patrons this year.

The public computers have always played a necessary role in bridging the digital divide in people's lives. Residents without access to home computers continue to visit the library to use the workstations to



use email, browse the internet, apply for jobs, complete forms and use Word or Excel.

Tech Help

The library has also played an important role in helping library members access our digital collections and troubleshoot any issues that they may have with their devices. The assistance ranged from how to download eBooks and audiobooks to how to access and read our collection of online newspapers and magazines. In addition, assisting patrons with government forms and how to use the scanner continue to be some of the top requests received at the reference desk.

RESEARCH

Jane's Walk

On May 7, the library organized the 7th annual *Jane's Walk*. The event was an outstanding success, attracting over 100 attendees. The walk was led by **Councillor Dida Berku, Councillor Mitch Kujavsky,** and **Library Director Janine West,** with the participation of **Mayor Mitchell Brownstein.** It was held

in the north-western part of Côte Saint-Luc, from Blossom to Westminster and from Guelph to Mackle. The leaders told the story of how the area went from farmland to residential, the important impact that the railway had on growth and expansion while showing some of the major points of interest in this neighborhood along the way. Much research goes into preparing for this event and the library thanks its tireless librarians for their contribution!

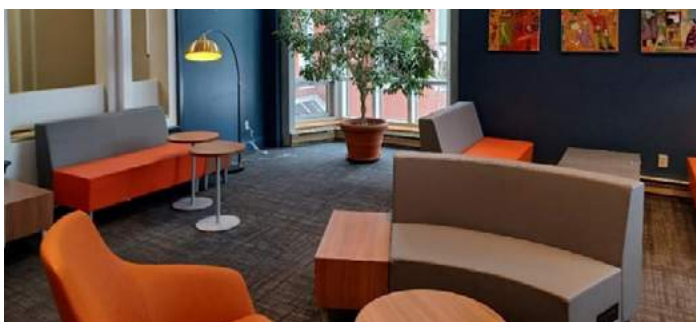


LIBRARY SPACES



LIBRARY CAFÉ

The library updated the café space in 2023 with new paint colours and new laminate counters. New furnishings, in the form of tables and chairs, were added.

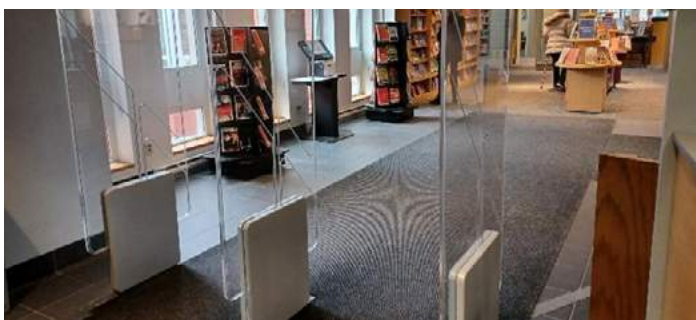


LIBRARY LOUNGES

Continuing with our update of the first lounge, we repainted the upper sections of the room white and gray around the windows. We also added 2 modern floor lamps to complete the look as well as some modern and colourful artwork.



The Periodical Lounge also received some attention this year with the purchase of 4 new lounge chairs. Clad in vinyl for easy maintenance, they have the look of linen fabric. They replace old worn-out chairs and give the space a fresher look, enhanced by a subtle change in the paint colour above the plate rail and around the windows.



SECURITY GATES

In 2023, the library switched to RFID technology modernizing its circulation operations and improving security. All the items in our collection have been outfitted with new security tags and new security gates, which work with new RFID tags, feature clear Plexiglas on the upper part and glow if the sensor is triggered.



COLLABORATIVE SPACE

The new look for the Collaborative Space was completed in 2023. Along with a new coat of paint, the room now has 4 new study tables with integrated lighting including power outlets and charging ports as well as 16 new comfortable chairs. The result is an appealing, modern and functional space that favours group study.

LIBRARY WEBSITE

CHILDREN'S WEBSITE



to a younger audience. This new website allows the library to promote collections, programs, and events to our teen and child members.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Between December of 2022 and 2023, the library newsletter grew by 1,000 individual emails. Facebook followers grew from 1,296 to 1,522, up by 226 subscribers. Growing our social media presence enables us to be flexible and quick in disseminating information and allows us to engage with our audience on an ongoing basis.

One of our top Facebook posts was this one with 1,580 people reached and 68 post engagements.



A proud TD Summer Reading Club weekly trivia winner.

COMMITTED TO LIFELONG LEARNING

The library has always had a long tradition of providing programming that develops lifelong skills. These range from language groups like **Spanish Conversation** to **Science Demystified with Dr. Joe Schwarcz** and **In the Headlines with Hershey Dvoskin**.

iPad Classes

In October, the library resumed its in-house tech classes with Senior Services Coordinator Katie Bezaire leading an iPad for beginners class starting at the end of October, running through the beginning of December. The small class size has proved to be a benefit, covering topics like adding and deleting apps from home screens, searching for apps using a spotlight search, adding and deleting contacts, composing emails with attachments, texting, and ways to use the camera.

Technology Classes

Katie continued to assist Rhonda Schechtman with the Women's Club's iPad and iPhone classes in 2023 until the month of October.



RAISING AWARENESS

Film: What We Choose to Remember



On January 18, 32 people attended a documentary film screening entitled *What We Choose To Remember*, chronicling the diverse narratives of generations of anglophones who have remained in Quebec and those of subsequent waves of immigrants who embraced this vibrant, idiosyncratic locale as their home.

Leading the discussion, Filmmaker **Guy Rex Rodgers**, explained how he conceived of the project and that the interviews sparked a profound discourse on the unique experiences of the Quebec English-speaking community. The ensuing Q & A session featured numerous personal anecdotes and spirited deliberations on the prospects of English in Quebec. Attendees found the film's relevance particularly poignant in light of Bill 96, appreciating its historical import alongside its contemporary significance.

Film: Buffy Sainte-Marie: Carry It On

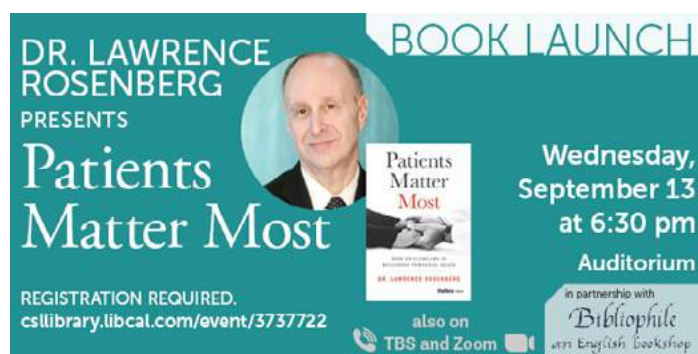


On April 19, the library showed the film *Carry It On* exploring the life, music and activism of legendary indigenous singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie. Introduced by **Dr. Craig Morrison** this well-researched film divulged many lesser-known details of

Sainte-Marie's life, and brought together a fine ensemble of tributes, most notably from Joni Mitchell. The film underscored how Buffy Sainte-Marie has used her platform to campaign for indigenous and women's rights and inspired multiple generations of musicians, artists and activists. There was a lively discussion afterwards as many were surprised by what they'd learned through the documentary.

Patients Matter Most with Dr. Lawrence Rosenberg

On September 13, 97 people attended a book launch featuring **Dr. Lawrence Rosenberg** who presented his new book *Patients Matter Most* and who brought a lifetime of experience as a surgeon, medical school professor, and health system CEO to this exploration of the changing landscape of medical care. During his talk, he explained the parallel developments in technology and in healthcare delivery and spoke of innovative ways in which doctors could utilize technology to work better with other healthcare providers. Many books were sold by Sandra Climan, our partner from Bibliophile. The Q & A brought out many anecdotal experiences from attendees looking to understand how health services might be improved.



DR. LAWRENCE ROSENBERG PRESENTS **Patients Matter Most**

BOOK LAUNCH

Wednesday, September 13 at 6:30 pm Auditorium

REGISTRATION REQUIRED. cslibrary.libcal.com/event/3737722

also on TBS and Zoom

in partnership with Bibliophile and English Bookshop

LEARNING IS FUN AT THE LIBRARY

CHILDREN'S STEAM PROGRAMS

From sewing to LEGO, the library continues its tradition of providing STEAM experiences for all ages. *Butterflies and Pollinators* with **McGill Let's Talk Science** brought in kid-friendly monarch education once again in August, introducing butterflies and pollinators to children in an engaging way, while *Discover Astronomy* with **Plateau Astro** sparked children's curiosity about seasons.

Mitten Monsters



On February 28, 28 children and parents joined Coady to create stuffed monster dolls out of mittens. Participants learned basic sewing skills, such as how to stitch fabric together and how to sew on buttons. They then decorated their monsters with felt accessories, button eyes, and other creative features. This activity was a great chance to teach useful skills in a fun way and encouraged the children to think of imaginative ways to recycle old materials. Five teen volunteers joined Coady to assist the children with sewing and giving one-on-one help that further enhanced the program.

LEGO Club

January 18 was the inaugural meeting of *LEGO Club* which had 9 children between the ages of 5 and 12, who joined Coady to build and play with Lego. The theme for the week was "Imaginary Cities", which got some very creative responses. Participants built houses with sunflower gardens and rooftop diving boards, a city complete with factories, railroads and snowplows, garages full of moon rovers, and even a house with its own rocket ship. They were proud to show and tell the group about their creations at the end of the session and have been returning to the library to look at their projects on display in the department. This bi-weekly program is a great tool to build STEAM skills.



Marble Madness

On April 23, 25 children and 12 parents joined Coady and 4 teen volunteers to design and build their own marble mazes. Participants learned the steps of the design process (make a plan, build a prototype, test your creation, and make adjustments) and then got building! The kids were encouraged to use their creativity to turn everyday recycled materials such as paper tubes, cardboard, and popsicle sticks into unique toys. They were very engaged in the engineering process and learned valuable problem-solving skills as they figured out how to create a working marble run.

LEARNING IS FUN AT THE LIBRARY

DIY Chia Pets

On May 21, 19 families joined Olivia to create their very own Chia pets! The session began by introducing the concept of seeds and seedlings, encouraging the children to think about how plants grow, and what they need to thrive in their environment. The children and their families proceeded to get creative with their chia pets, gave them names, and, of their own accord, began to make pledges with one another to water their pets every day and give them haircuts when the seeds begin to sprout.



Meet the Robots

On July 18, 10 children and 4 teen volunteers joined Coady and Anabelle to learn basic coding skills with the Library's Ozobots. Ozobots are small robots with a colour-reading sensor on the underside; they travel along black marker lines and can be instructed to perform various actions by inserting colour sequences into the line. The kids constructed mazes for the Ozobots and experimented with coding different commands using coloured markers. This program was a big hit! The kids loved playing with the robots, and parents were excited to have them learn about coding and robotics.



Newspaper Bridge Challenge

On September 9, 23 children joined Olivia to test their engineering skills and build strong newspaper bridges that would stand up to the weight of some of the children's department's heaviest books. The session began with a lesson on compression and tension forces, as well as some of the different types of bridges that exist. The children went on to design and build their own newspaper bridges and put them to the test!



Lava Lamps

On October 15, 27 children between the ages of 5 and 12, along with 2 teen volunteers, joined Coady to explore chemical reactions by creating their own glow-in-the-dark lava lamps. They learned about density as oil and water separated in the jars, and observed the chemical reaction between acidic and basic substances that produced bubbles carrying glow-in-the-dark paint through the oil layer when Alka-Seltzer tablets were added. The kids had a great time repeatedly initiating the reactions and watching their lava lamps bubble under the fluorescent lights. Several parents expressed their appreciation for science programs at the library and showed interest in attending similar events in the future.

LEARNING IS FUN AT THE LIBRARY

SPECIAL VISITS

Reptizoo

On March 5, **Reptizoo** came to the library to teach children about reptiles. They gave two one-hour presentations attended by a total of 52 children. Participants had the opportunity to meet and touch snakes, turtles, skinks, geckos, and other animals. The animator introduced each animal and explained their scientific names, lifespans, habitats, and diet. Participants were excited to see some unusual reptiles like the albino ball python and the giant boa. They were very interested in the reptiles' lives and habitats and asked many insightful questions.



Butterflies and Pollinators with McGill Let's Talk Science

On August 13, 24 children between the ages of 5 and 12 came to hear **McGill's Let's Talk Science** outreach team talk about monarch butterfly migration. The McGill team taught the group about monarch habitats, their migration route, and scientific efforts to track the migration, as well as hazards to the butterflies and ways in which we can all act to protect monarch populations. The group ended by creating their own paper monarch butterflies.

Discover Astronomy

On July 16, the library welcomed **Trevor Kjorlien** from **Plateau Astro** who taught the children all about seasons. Twenty-four children and 2 teen volunteers joined to learn about how the tilt of Earth's axis and rotation around the sun creates different seasons. The children constructed their own models of the Earth and rotated them around the "Sun" (a table lamp) to observe how the position of the Earth changes throughout the year.



MUSIC

Ensemble Caprice presents *Vivaldi and the Baroque Nomads*



There were approximately 145 people in attendance at the September 27 evening's classical music concert featuring **Ensemble Caprice**. Under the direction of **Matthias Maute**, the very impressive nine-musician ensemble played a total of 8 pieces. Throughout the concert, Matthias Maute provided bilingual commentary that enhanced the understanding of the pieces played. The caliber of performance was outstanding, and we received many positive comments and gratitude.

Diogo Ramos presents *Electro-Samba*

Brought to the Greenspon Auditorium from Trudeau Park due to rain, this lively June 28 musical performance was presented within the context of the *Conseil des Arts de Montréal en tournée*. The five musicians, led by Brazilian-Montrealer **Diogo Ramos**, brought Electro-Samba Funk to the stage through a fusion of Brazilian beats alongside lyrics created in collaboration with Quebecois musicians, as well as the poems of Gilles Vigneault and Felix Leclerc. Diogo Ramos sang and played traditional and electric guitar and was accompanied by a band with diverse backgrounds and individual talents. The audience was treated to a medley of Portuguese, Spanish, English, and French, including songs from Diogo Ramos's newest album, *Cabaca*. Songs dedicated to Diogo's two daughters, Stella and Nina, got everyone up on their feet dancing.



Space Time Continuo presents *Three Cellos Tie Some Knots*

This top-notch musical performance was presented within the context of the *Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée* on May 10. The three musicians of **Space Time Continuo** explored the colours and textures of baroque cello, viola da gamba, and bass violin with a repertoire for one, two, and three instruments. Audience members were invited to discover the music of composers from the 17th century and today. Performers **Amanda Keesmat**, **Andrea Stewart**, and **Elinor Frey** provided commentary and explanations, both of their instruments and of the pieces played throughout the performance. Ten pieces total were performed to the delight of our audience.

A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

Vintage Wine: Rock 'n' Roll '50s, 60s, 70s



On July 12, Côte Saint-Luc's beloved **Vintage Wine** returned with **Craig Morrison** and his band performing hits from the 50s, 60s and 70s with 500 people in attendance. It was the first outing for Côte Saint-Luc's new mobile stage. The hits of Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, the Everly Brothers, Fats Domino, the Righteous Brothers, Buddy Holly, Roy Orbison, the Beatles, Animals, Rolling Stones, Temptations, Wilson Picket, Creedence Clearwater Revival, and others delighted the crowd who were happy to be outside after a week long stretch of rain.



Bagg Street Klezmer Band

On July 19, the Bagg Street Klezmer Band performed to an appreciative audience of 750 people. The band, founded in 1992, took its name from Quebec's oldest synagogue situated on the corner of Bagg and Clark streets. Rickety Rick, the lead singer, shared the story of the band's first performance in Côte Saint-Luc, at the very park in which they played in 1992. They were thrilled to return to the park with a much larger audience and an impressive professional stage setup. The performance was dedicated to physician Dr. Hy Goldman, a giant of Klezmer and co-founder

of KlezKanada, who passed away on May 19, 2023 at the age of 96.



FILM SCREENINGS

During the summer months, over 700 people attended the various screenings of the library's *Bright Lights Film Club*. Each film was accompanied by an introduction by volunteer **Gayle Cohen** and was followed by a discussion to analyze and delve into the themes and ideas explored in each film. The conversations which ensued sometimes lasted more than an hour. In addition, the library continued to offer the very popular *Friday Afternoon at the Movies* once a month.

A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

PERFORMANCES

Shakespeare-in-the-Park



On July 26, 150 people attended *Shakespeare-in-the-Park*, presented by **Repercussion Theater**, behind the library in Ashkelon Gardens. With music, a dynamic eco-conscious design, and an ensemble of eight talented actors taking on multiple roles, *Cymbeline* explored what we do in the name of love, how deeply our humanity is rooted in the Earth, and how much we must sometimes lose to find ourselves, and each other, again.

A diverse crowd of regulars, families, Shakespeare aficionados, a few newcomers, as well as a group from *Hear Entendre Québec* happily enjoyed the performance despite the uncertain weather. The performance could be followed in English or in French through live subtitling using a special app on any cell phone, designed to increase accessibility. Repercussion Theater providing chairs for rent, as well as concessions and swag, added to the pleasure of attendees and the overall atmosphere.

Songs and Stories of the Sephardim with Judith Cohen



On October 25, 82 people attended *Songs and Stories of the Sephardim* with **Judith Cohen** as part of the 30-year anniversary of the *Montreal Intercultural Storytelling Festival*. Doctor Judith Cohen, an ethnomusicologist and musician, has travelled all around the Mediterranean collecting

songs and stories from the oral tradition. She explained that when the Jews were expelled from

Spain in 1492, they brought their songs with them. Over the centuries, some of these sung tales were integrated into pan-European balladry while others only in Moroccan or Ottoman Sephardic communities. Judith sang some of each, guiding the audience through the stories of the ballads and of the people who have been singing them.

Les Illusionnistes: Magic Recital

On August 6, over 150 people came to Ashkelon Gardens to watch a magic recital by **Les Illusionnistes**.



This mostly silent, 1920's-inspired magic show included whimsical costuming, musical instruments, comedy, and tricks performed by a unique theatrical duo, offering a bewitching and witty moment with a very classic touch. It was enjoyed by all ages.

Geordie Productions

On December 17, **Geordie Theatre** performed a fun and engaging show for families. *Perfect Storm* drew a crowd of 125 children, adults, and even a few teens. The show, set in a sixth-grade theatre classroom, brought to life the relatable themes of competition, perfectionism, perseverance, and self-image in an interactive and humorous way. A crowd of audience members stayed after the show to learn more about Geordie and get advice from the actors themselves.

A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

EXHIBITS

Kateryna Kobylianska

The wonderful exhibit by artist Kateryna Kobylianska was hung on April 6. Kateryna creates light and airy abstract pieces that create a sense of movement and calm.



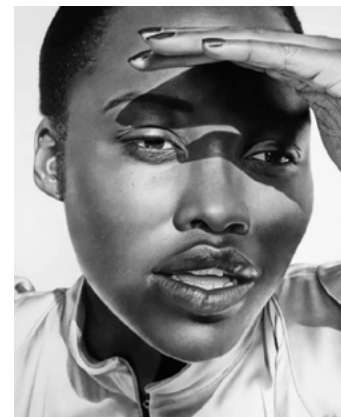
Nathan Letofsky

April and May featured an exhibit by artist and long-time Côte Saint-Luc resident Nathan Letofsky. Transitioning from successful businessman to artist, Letofsky pursued studies at the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal and L'École des beaux-arts de Montréal to become a prolific creator of masterful paintings, landscapes and abstracts that have been favoured by private and corporate collectors alike. Nathan sadly passed away in 2014 and his life's work is now in the possession of his son Robert. Robert lives in Vermont, and due to COVID, this exhibit has been in the works for 4 years.



Ginny Morello

On June 28, a new exhibit by highly talented artist Ginny Morello was hung. Ginny is an ultra-realist illustrator who creates photography-level details in her portrait work. It is not uncommon for Ginny to spend over 100 hours creating a single artwork.



Megerditch Tarakdjian

From October 24 to the end of 2023, the Art Gallery featured a new exhibit by renowned sculptor Megerditch Tarakdjian. Megerditch is traditionally a bronze sculptor who has in recent years expanded the materials that he uses. He now uses a mix of steel, Styrofoam, LED lighting, wood, material, and plaster. The display highlighted the two very different but harmonious styles of his art. A traditional layout wall display was used to highlight his bronze sculptures on one side of the Art Gallery, the other side has been organized in a more unique "sculpture garden" to highlight the uniqueness of the mixed media pieces.



FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

LITERARY PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS

Afternoon Book Club

Antonella's book club continues to be popular, with 10 library members registered in it. The group met 8 times this year and read a variety of different types of books such as historical fiction (*The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and *The Diamond Eye* by Kate Quinn), lighthearted fiction (*How the Penguins Saved Veronica* by Hazel Prior) and contemporary fiction (*Hello Beautiful* by Ann Napolitano). The goal of the Afternoon Book Club has always been to have conversations that are entertaining and interesting to all club members.

Café Con medialunas

Since its beginning, Maria's book club has focused on books written by authors from the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America. With 14 people registered in it, it is one of the most popular book clubs that the library offers. During the nine sessions that were held this year, participants exchanged their viewpoints and created animated and enriching conversations.

Some very interesting titles were covered this year including *Death at Intervals* by José Saramago, *Violeta* by Isabel Allende, *The Trust* by Hernan Diaz, and *Olga Dies Dreaming* by Xochitl Gonzalez.

Canada Reads



Our *Canada Reads 2023: Côte Saint-Luc Edition* took place on March 15. Twenty one people chose to attend in person, while 27 took advantage of the option to tune in virtually via Zoom. As with all previous years, librarians pulled out all the stops to defend their book, treating the audience to professional overviews and critiques that would make their authors very proud! At our version of CBC's event, Lisa animated the debate, Hannah defended *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel, Danielle defended *Ducks* by Kate Beaton, Jennifer defended *Hotline* by Dimitri Nasrallah, Maria defended *Mexican Gothic* by Silvia

Moreno-Garcia, and Mearaid defended *Greenwood* by Michael Christie.

Jennifer won the debate with the most votes going to *Hotline* by Dimitri Nasrallah. Prizes consisting of the five shortlisted books as well as a Canada Reads bag.

Author Talks

Danielle continued offering quality interviews with well-known and critically acclaimed authors as a result of her partnerships with publishers including Harper Collins and Random House as well Paragraphe bookstore. These programs were broadcast on TBS and Zoom. Highlights included *A Conversation with International Bestselling Author Armando Luc Correa*, *A Conversation with International Bestselling Historical Fiction Author Julia Kelly*, as well as a book launch featuring **Roberta Rich** and her newest novel *The Jazz Club Spy*.



(left to right) Armando Luc Correa (cr. Ciro Guitérrez) Julia Kelly (cr. Scott Bottles), Roberta Rich (cr. Guy Immega)

Meet Our Local Authors

Councillor Mike Cohen continued interviewing local authors in his *Meet our Local Authors* series. Every month Mike highlights a local author who has recently published a book of interest to Côte Saint-Luc residents. These programs are featured on the library's YouTube channel and garner many views. Most memorable programs include Mike's interview with **Dr. Phil Gold**, who was interviewed about his new book *Gold's Rounds: Medicine, McGill, and Growing Up Jewish in Montreal*, his interview with **Kid Mercury** about his new children's book *Stories*

FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL



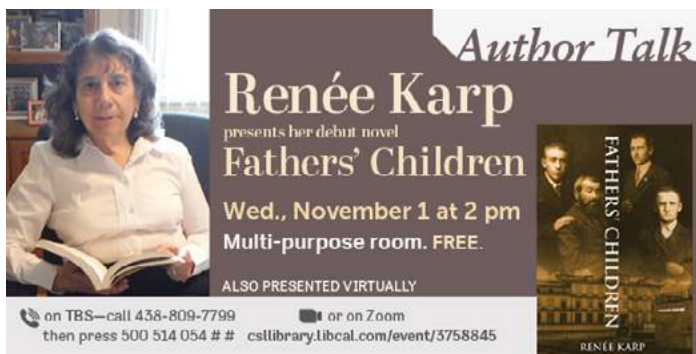
for *Souls of all Ages*, an A-Z Spiritual Journey, and finally his interview with **Ian Halperin** about his new book entitled *Bigot* about the rise of antisemitism.

Présentation de Nouveautés de la Librairie Monet

On May 24, booksellers from Librairie Monet, came to present new French books from Québec and Europe. They were accompanied by adult programming director of the Galeries Normandie bookstore, **Laurent Borrégo**. A variety of titles were recommended and covered many themes and authors from diverse backgrounds.

Father's Children with Renée Karp

On November 1, to commemorate Holocaust Education Week, the library hosted author and professor **Renée Karp** to present her debut novel *Fathers' Children*. The novel, she explained, was the result of the inspiration of her parents, her interest in history, and her belief that young people must understand



the past in order to forge a better future. It tells the compelling story of two long-time friends who raise two very different children. One father's son fights valiantly for justice and human dignity while the other young man embraces Fascism with astonishing fervor. Set against the backdrop of the madness and

brutality of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, *Fathers' Children* explores age-old questions about the complex relationships between fathers and their children.



You've Gotta Read This!

On June 21, Jennifer organized the much-anticipated literary event and shared her summer reading recommendations followed by recommendations by Danielle, Hannah, Library Director Janine West, and finally Mearaid. Each offered insightful snippets of both what to read now and what to read next. Attendees were delighted to listen to their favorite staff members recommend great books.

Côte Saint-Luc Reads

On October 12, approximately 35 people attended *Côte Saint-Luc Reads* with **Bryn Turnbull** and **Anne Lagacé Dowson**. A small reception was held prior to the event with a musical performance from saxophonist **Micheal Abramovich**. Anne Lagacé Dowson interviewed author Bryn Turnbull on her writing process, her inspirations, and the importance of historical fiction.



FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

LITERARY PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN

Summer Reading Club

During the 2023 Summer Reading Club, the youth department collected over 70 bookmark design submissions from participants in the club from ages 3 to 17. Winners in three age categories each had 500 bookmarks printed with their name, age, and name of their artwork on the back. The bookmarks are currently available at the youth desk and are often asked-after. The contest, led by Coady, has been so popular that it will become an annual addition to the Summer Reading Club.

On August 22, the Library held the closing party for the TD Summer Reading Club. This year, there were 147 members in the club. Party activities included giant games in Ashkelon Gardens, face painting, a trivia scavenger hunt, and a collaborative art project where participants decorated their thumbprints and added them to a communal frame, which will be displayed in the youth department. This year's model, focusing on time and effort spent reading, rather than the amount read, had a very positive impact on children of all reading levels.



Author Storytime: Bonnie Frankel presents *Hop in Lot*

On Sunday, April 30, the library welcomed local author **Bonnie Frankel** for a special presentation of her picture book *Hop in Lot*. Twenty-six children between the ages of 3 and 9 years old attended, as well as 29 adults. After Bonnie read the story to the children, we identified different emotions in the book and talked about dealing with positive and negative feelings. We then identified all the animals in the book and practiced making animal sounds. We finished by colouring pages from the book and drawing the names of three participants to win a copy signed by Bonnie.



FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

Deep Sea Storytime with Author Lydia Lukidis

On Sunday, March 26, author **Lydia Lukidis** visited the library to present her new book *Deep, Deep Down: The Secret Underwater Poetry of the Mariana Trench*. Thirteen children and their parents listened to Ms. Lydia present the not-so-scary creatures of the deepest part of the ocean, who live in complete darkness, day in and day out, looking for food and escaping predators. Afterward, participants created their own dynamic snailfish that glowed in the dark and under blacklight.



REACHING OUT

Part of the library's mission is to reach out beyond the walls to engage with members of the community of Côte Saint-Luc. This can take many forms including programming, the most popular of which are featured below.



POETRY WORKSHOPS

Katie has been involved with the Cummings Centre's Drop-In Program at the ACC since its inception in 2019. She continued to lead poetry discussions twice a month for the majority of 2023, only reducing her visits to once a month in October to better accommodate in-house library needs.

BOOK CLUBS—B'NAI BRITH

The B'Nai Brith Book Clubs began in December of 2022 and continued at both residences until March of 2023 when it was decided with Caldwell Residences' Recreation Coordinator, **Monica Margolis**, that the two book clubs would be merged into one. Chateau residents were welcome to continue Book Club at the B'Nai Brith House.



REACHING OUT

VIRTUAL DISCUSSION GROUPS

What began as a Virtual Book Discussion Group with the Women’s Club during the pandemic morphed into a Virtual Book Discussion Group open to all residents of Côte Saint-Luc in 2023. Led by Katie, the virtual format allowed members to participate from the comforts of their homes promoting accessibility for those needing to work around mobility issues, or accommodating other restrictions like illness, lack of transportation, or needed medical appointments.

WALDORF’S MONTHLY POP-UP LIBRARIES



Pop-Up Libraries at the Waldorf continued strongly in 2023, offering residents the opportunity to browse over 200 library items, and to consult with a librarian every month.



SCHOOL VISITS—HEBREW ACADEMY

On March 20, 27 pre-kindergarten children, aged 4, and their educators from the CPE Hebrew Academy joined Olivia to visit the library. The storytime was followed by a collaborative craft which allowed the children to use their paperchain-making skills to create two very long hungry caterpillars that were then displayed in the library. The children were very proud of their work!

On March 27, 19 pre-kindergarten children, aged 3, and their educators from the CPE Hebrew Academy joined Olivia to visit the library. After an interactive story and rhyme time, the children decorated leaves for springtime.



COME CELEBRATE WITH US

HARRY POTTER BIRTHDAY PARTY



On August 1, approximately 120 children and their families attended *Harry Potter's Birthday Party*. Activities included a sorting hat, where children could spin the wheel to find out their Hogwarts house and make a house badge, wand making, a divination and tarot reading station, face painting, and making slime in potions class. Several teen volunteers arrived before the party to help decorate the department as well as assist in running the activity stations. The team spent a great deal of time and effort on the immersive decoration which turned the youth department into Hogwarts, moving the bar up once again for the yearly event.

HALLOWEEN PARTY

On October 31, 89 children and 5 teen volunteers joined the team for Halloween night. Festivities included a scavenger hunt created by Anabelle, DIY loot bags with Coody and Olivia, face painting by Louna, and a spooky storytime with Bronwen. A surprise visit from two SVPM officers was an exciting addition to the event; children had their pictures taken with police officers, who also handed out candy to lineups of eager trick-or-treaters.



MAD HATTER VALENTINE TEA PARTY

On February 12, 14 families attended the *Mad Hatter's Valentine Tea Party*. The wall decorations and tablecloths, along with the tea pots and reading nook, made this program an immersive and imaginative experience for participants. The tea party began



with crafts where the children had the opportunity to make paper crowns and personalized felt sleeves for their teacups. This was followed by a "tea" (pomegranate lemonade or chocolate milk) in the cups that the guests decorated, and kosher mini cupcakes. Tea party guests were then invited to colour Alice in Wonderland coloring pages or sit in the reading nook where they had a selection of Valentine's Day and *Alice in Wonderland*-themed picture and chapter books to choose from.

SOME STANDOUT AND NOTEWORTHY CUSTOMER SERVICE MOMENTS FROM THIS YEAR...

After helping a patron to clear up his iPad storage, a patron said,

“ Thank God for the library and all your help! My kids are too busy to help me and I wouldn't be able to figure things out without the library's help! ”

“ The library is a life saver 'literally.' How can I get help with my iPad otherwise?! ”

“ I always say to my friends that this is the best library. ”

“ You will not find this level of help in any other library, thank you. ”

A patron looking for help on how to pay for renewal of permanent resident visas for him and his son said very gratefully after trying and failing for several days that there should be

“ more people like you. ”

From a mom...

“ I have never seen my daughter read more than she has this summer. ”

“ My son feels like he's part of something special, ”

said a parent whose son attended the Lego Club.

After Olivia's programs, Hebrew Academy Daycare Director Shoshana Neuer wrote to the team saying,

“ Thank you for a beautiful library program. The teachers and children returned so very happy. ”