

Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Prepared by Janine West, Director

MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR



The Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library once again achieved an enviable score of 96 percent for outstanding library service, as awarded by the Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec for 2024. This recognition is a powerful testament to the invaluable role the library plays in our community, and I could not be prouder of the work we do every day.

Library programming continued to be a cornerstone of community engagement, offering enriching experiences for all ages and interests. Signature lecture series such as *Science Demystified* with Dr. Joe Schwarcz and *In the Headlines* with news expert Hershey Dvoskin fostered lifelong learning and thoughtful dialogue. Author talks and book launches, Kathy Diamond's longstanding book review series, and our ongoing book clubs celebrated literature and ideas. Film programming—including the *Bright Lights Film Club* and *Friday Afternoon at the Movies*—provided opportunities for cultural exploration and discussion through cinema. A strong commitment to accessibility was reflected in hybrid programming and the availability of adult programs on YouTube for asynchronous viewing, ensuring broad and flexible access. From early literacy initiatives such as *Family Storytime* to creative and social programs including *Lego Club*, chess for children and adults, and CreateSpace for community artists, our diverse offerings encouraged curiosity, creativity, and meaningful connection.

Supporting the most vulnerable members of our community and collaborating with local organizations

remained a vital part of our core mission. The Library continued to reach out to isolated individuals by providing hands-on technology support in their homes, friendly check-in calls, and book deliveries. We also addressed growing concerns around online safety and fraud through targeted education on security and scam prevention. Through a partnership with the CIUSSS, we delivered a dedicated program to support seniors in navigating the health-care system, particularly those without a family doctor. With funding from the Federal Government's New Horizons Grant, we offered the *Tales and Travel Memories* program, designed to support individuals living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia and their caregivers through meaningful engagement and shared experiences. In addition, we collaborated with organizations such as LogisAction, which provided advice and support on tenant-related issues, and the NDG Community Council, whose partnership supported our annual Tax Clinic.

The many programs and services we offer would not be possible without the dedication of our exceptional staff and the continued support of the Mayor and City Council. I would also like to thank the residents who make the library an integral part of their lives and our community.

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

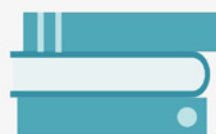
Empowering everyone to live a happier and healthier life by fostering creativity, discovery and social connection.

Côte Saint-Luc Public Library

2025 | YEAR REVIEW

221,285

items checked out



Top 10 checked out books



214,619

library visits

The library averaged over 588 visitors each day!

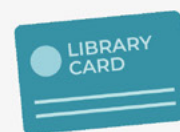


388

programs offered

11,083

program attendees



10,286

active cardholders

401,053

visits to our website



34,406

digital items checked out

29,173

questions answered

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATIONS



Seniors Outreach and Community Engagement

The Library's Seniors' Services Coordinator actively participated in community initiatives to connect older adults with local resources. On May 21, she joined the SPVM for their annual Door-to-Door program at the B'nai Brith House. This initiative brings seniors face-to-face with organizations in their community, helping them discover valuable services and support.

On June 13, the Library participated in a kiosk at Cavendish Mall for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, partnering with the SPVM and other local organizations, including the Eva Marsden Centre and AGI. Staff engaged mall visitors, highlighting the library's programs and services while raising awareness about elder abuse and community support networks.

LogisAction

Throughout 2025, the Library partnered with LogisAction to offer a series of tenants' rights workshops. On January 21, they offered a session on renovictions, evictions, and changes in ownership, explaining tenants' legal recourses. On April 23, attendees were guided through lease transfers and rental increases. Finally, on November 20, the organization presented on tenants' rights and obligations, addressing rent increases, age-related eviction protections, and Tribunal des locataires procedures. These workshops encouraged peer support, provided practical guidance, and strengthened community awareness of renters' legal protections.

Care Calls and Home Library Services

The Library's Care Calls and Home Library Services continued to provide essential support to community members who are homebound or in need of regular connection. Over the year, staff made 5,136 care calls, offering wellness check-ins, friendly conversation, and information about library and community resources. In addition, 260 home deliveries were completed, with 6,572 items delivered directly to patrons' homes.

These services play a vital role in reducing isolation, supporting independent living, and ensuring equitable access to library materials.

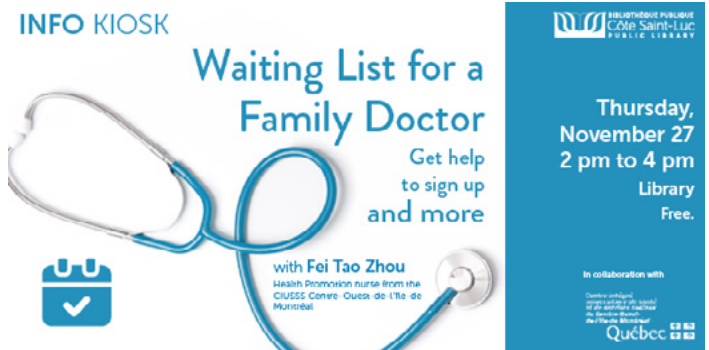


COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATIONS

Access to Healthcare and Social Services

On November 25, a workshop was held to respond to community needs for information on accessing healthcare and social services. Nurse Fei Tao Zhou from CIUSSS du Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal explained the role of the CIUSSS, appropriate use of 911, 811, and 211, how to obtain healthcare appointments, and available supports for seniors, including the elder abuse hotline.

On November 27, an information kiosk in the Library Café provided one-on-one support for individuals seeking guidance on finding family doctors and specialists. Nurse Fei Tao Zhou returned to share healthcare and senior-focused resources.



These activities increased community awareness of healthcare pathways, improved confidence in navigating services, and strengthened connections between healthcare providers and library resources.



Alzheimer's and Dementia Support

On March 14, 2025, the Library announced the receipt of a \$21,000 grant from the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program to launch *Tales & Travel Memories*, a library program for seniors living with dementia and their caregivers. The program uses travel-themed materials to encourage memory recall, conversation, and social engagement.

Beginning in the Fall, the program was offered in two 6-week sessions, with participants exploring a different country each week through stories, music, visuals, and curated materials. The program was led by the Seniors' Services Librarian, with support from volunteers and community partners.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COLLABORATIONS



The grant funded program materials, training, promotion, and staff time, supporting the City's ongoing commitment to meaningful services for seniors and their caregivers. The program has had a significant impact, with participants expressing joy and renewed engagement, while caregivers reported that their loved ones greatly enjoyed the experience.

On November 25, the Bibliothèques des banlieues de l'Île de Montréal (BIBIM), which includes the Côte Saint-Luc Library, launched Cognitive Care Kits designed to support individuals experiencing cognitive changes and their caregivers. The kits include cognitive activities, creative materials, and caregiver resources tailored to varying ability levels. This joint initiative was partially funded through a donation from BIBIM.



Writing Workshop: My Story My Way

In July, the Library hosted a four-week writing workshop led by Julian Sher, offered as part of the Quebec Writers' Federation's *Storyscaping* program, which is provided free to public libraries. The workshop gave attendees guided instruction and practical exercises, fostering creativity and writing skills in a supportive environment.

BROADENING OUR SERVICES



Social Crafting

In response to community requests for more drop-in programs that reduce social isolation and encourage interaction, the *Social Crafting* program has grown steadily in popularity since its inception. Enhancements such as offering coffee, adding a dedicated volunteer, and expanding activities to include knitting and drawing have enriched the experience. Participants value the opportunity for conversation and the sense of community.

How to Protect Yourself Online

On March 19, the Library presented *How to Protect Yourself Online*, led by Professor Samad Rostampour of Vanier College. The session offered practical guidance on avoiding online scams, safeguarding personal information, and using secure digital tools, while directing participants to trusted resources for fraud prevention. Programs like this demonstrate the library's commitment to broadening its services beyond cultural programming, supporting digital literacy and helping the community navigate the online world safely.

REACHING OUT



In 2025, the Library offered four ongoing outreach programs, as well as a Virtual Book Discussion Group designed to support older adults, particularly those with limited mobility. The B'nai Brith Book Club, Chateau B'nai Brith Book Club, and Waldorf Book Review are monthly initiatives that bring library programming directly into senior residences, fostering community connection and engagement. The Virtual Book Discussion Group extended this experience to seniors living independently and was recorded and shared on the Library's YouTube channel, ensuring access for those unable to attend live sessions. In addition, the Library partnered with the Cummings Centre's Drop-In Program to offer poetry-based programming, supporting socialization and communication for individuals living with dementia.

A PLACE FOR TEENS

Lounge

A new study table was added to the lounge in the spring. Due to its immediate popularity—particularly among teens—a second identical table was later installed, creating a modern, comfortable space that supports group work and collaborative activities.



Digital Photography for Teens

The Library's six-week digital photography program for teens, led by Avi Kroo, took place over the course of summer. Teens learned five key artistic principles and practiced using them in the scenic Ashkelon Gardens, starting with smartphones and progressing to digital cameras. Working in pairs, participants captured striking images of nature—including a monarch caterpillar—and shared their photos for group discussion, gaining hands-on experience and creative skills in photography.

VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Book Sales

The Library's Spring (April 26 – 27) and Fall (November 7 – 8) Book Sales were both highly successful, raising over \$6,000 combined. These events relied on the dedication of volunteers, who handled setup, sales, and cleanup, and on the support of Public Works staff. The Fall Sale also featured a bake sale hosted by the Cat Committee, adding a popular fundraising element. The sales not only generated revenue but strengthened community engagement and volunteer participation.

Volunteer Appreciation Night

On September 25, the city held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Night.

Longtime tax clinic volunteer Maria Thomas received the Library Outreach Award for her dedication since 2018, supporting residents with modest incomes through the library's tax clinic. Maria's enthusiasm, compassion, and reliability have made a lasting impact on the community.



Sam Karbalaieghadiri won the Youth Award for leadership and initiative in enhancing library programs. Since 2022, Sam has contributed over 150 hours supporting events from Chess and LEGO Club to the Summer Reading Club, demonstrating thoughtful mentorship, quiet leadership, and a strong role-model presence for peers and children alike.

Tax Clinic

The Library's 5th annual Tax Clinic was held in April, providing essential support to vulnerable residents. Six sessions were offered throughout the month, resulting in 95 booked appointments and 85 completed tax returns, with over half of the participants being seniors.

The clinic relied on the dedication of eight volunteers, most of whom have supported the program for multiple years, as well as the guidance of a semi-retired tax accountant and the expert assistance of Julie Cormier and her team from NDG Tax Clinic. Their contributions ensured accurate filings and helped resolve complex questions, making the program a valuable community service.

Russian Storytime

On November 30, parent-volunteer Irina Brozgold read *The Story of How Finkus Got Lost When He Was Little* by Sven Nordqvist, translated into Russian. The story was followed by a craft where children created outfits for Finkus the Cat.

Discu-thé

Led by volunteer Jean Michel, registrants explored different themes to help them develop their vocabulary and make them feel more comfortable speaking French. The first session was held from February to April, and the second from October to December.



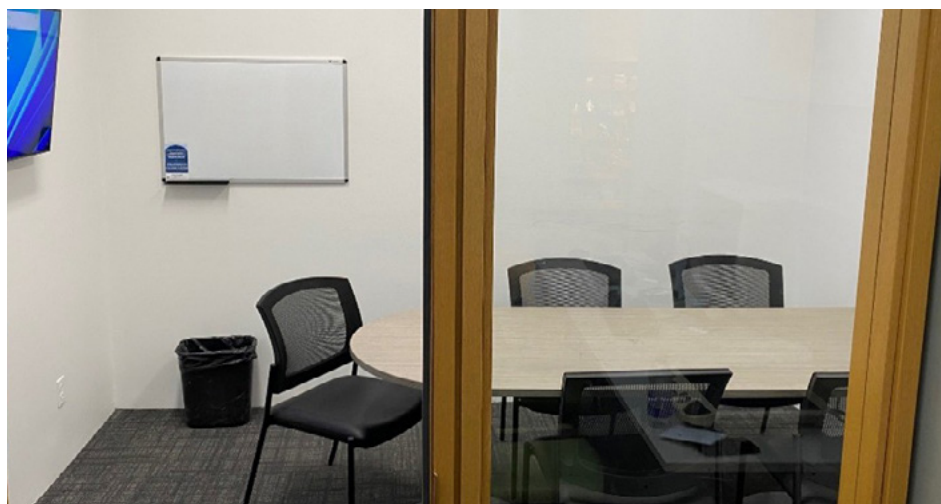
REFERENCE AND RESEARCH



Jane's Walk

The 9th annual Jane's Walk entitled *Cavendish: from Country Road to Modern Boulevard* took place on May 4, guiding residents through the history of Cavendish Boulevard. Led by Library Director Janine West and Councillor Dida Berku, participants explored the boulevard's evolution from King George Road to its current form, including a discussion of the Cavendish extension debate, the impact of the CPR rail line, the 1964 Master Plan, the development of Cavendish Mall, and the story of City Hall. Starting at Harold Greenspon Park and concluding at the library, the walk ended with a tribute to library founder Eleanor London.

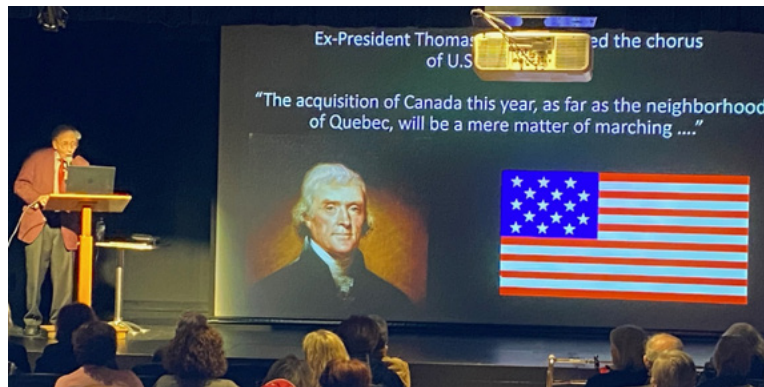
LIBRARY SPACES



Study Rooms

The library's two original study rooms underwent a comprehensive renovation to improve comfort, accessibility, and functionality. Both rooms received fresh plastering, painting, and modern furniture, replacing worn wooden pieces with seating and tables designed for collaborative work. The renovations increased seating capacity—five in the main room (up from four) and three in the smaller room (up from two)—and added new features, including a whiteboard and a wall-mounted television screen linked to the reservation system. These upgrades support group study, presentations, and professional use, reflecting the library's responsiveness to community needs. Acoustic sound tiles will be installed in 2026 to further enhance the space.

COMMITTED TO LIFELONG LEARNING



Canada and the United States: Partners but not Bedpartners

On October 29, the Library hosted *Canada and the United States: Partners but not Bedpartners*. Professor Emeritus Gary Evans (University of Ottawa) provided a historical overview of the complex Canada–U.S. relationship, from its early foundations through the War of 1812 to contemporary trade tensions and political rhetoric. A lively question-and-answer period explored topics including the automobile industry and future opportunities for younger generations.

RAISING AWARENESS

FILM SCREENING
In Commemoration of Holocaust Remembrance Day

June Zero

Monday, January 27
at 2 pm

Auditorium Free.
In Hebrew, Arabic & Spanish
with English subtitles

BIBLIOTHÈQUE PUBLIQUE
Côte Saint-Luc
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Holocaust Remembrance Day

On January 27, the library hosted a screening of *June Zero* to commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day. The American-Israeli drama, co-written and directed by Jake Paltrow, is based on true accounts. Library member Harriet Slimovitch shared her experience as a teenage transcriber of Eichmann trial testimonies, offering personal insight into this pivotal historical moment. Attendees engaged in reflection and discussion, many sharing memories of following the trial in their youth, highlighting the program’s role in preserving and connecting personal and collective history.

RAISING AWARENESS



photo : Dave Chan



National Canadian Film Day

On April 16, the library celebrated National Canadian Film Day with a screening of *Without Precedent: The Supreme Life of Rosalie Abella*. Mayor Mitchell Brownstein and MP Anthony Housefather introduced the event, with Housefather sharing personal experiences with Justice Abella. Director Barry Avrich and producer Marc Selby provided context before the film, which audiences described as inspiring and uplifting. A post-screening Q&A included a personal phone call to Justice Abella, adding a memorable, interactive moment for attendees.

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

On May 14, the library hosted a special screening of *Call Me by Your Name*. The Library introduced the program by highlighting the history of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, including its official recognition by the City of Côte Saint-Luc. Attendees described the film as “moving” and “artistic,” reflecting the event’s success in fostering reflection and community engagement.



Holocaust Education Week

On November 5, the library presented *A Conversation with Donna Nebenzahl*, moderated by Elaine Kalman Naves, commemorating Holocaust Education Week. Through discussion and readings from her memoir, *To Linger with You*, Nebenzahl reflected on her early life in 1950s British Guiana, the influence of her grandparents, and the discovery of her Jewish family history. The program fostered meaningful dialogue around memory, identity, and intergenerational history, reinforcing the library’s role as a space for learning, reflection, and community connection.

LEARNING IS FUN AT THE LIBRARY

Painting with Kim

On March 3, children explored painting techniques with the help of volunteers, learning color mixing and experimenting with pointillism. Some participants chose to leave their artwork for display at the library.

Write to win! With Monique Polak

Children had the opportunity to meet children's author Monique Polak in two lively sessions, receiving feedback on their writing and inspiration for new pieces. Fifteen young writers participated and submitted work to the writing contest. Both Monique and the children expressed appreciation for this second annual workshop.



Clay Creations

On March 7, a clay-building activity encouraged children's creativity, with volunteers helping participants select colors and add details like googly eyes.

Arts & Crafts with Animation KIDZ



This past summer, the Library collaborated with Animation KIDZ to design themed drop-in art sessions for ages 3 and up. From painting

sunsets to building imaginative structures, exploring airbrush art, and creating DIY and mixed-media projects like slime and jewelry, children and families had a wide variety of creative experiences. These themed activities sparked curiosity, inspired creativity, and made for another vibrant and successful summer at the library.

Make Your Own Holiday Gifts with Animation KIDZ

On November 27, Animation KIDZ brought some festive materials and helped 14 children and their families make holiday gifts for their loved ones.



A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

MUSIC



Cordâme: *Fabula Femina*

On May 7, Cordâme's *Fabula Femina* concert, presented in partnership with le Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée, celebrated women poets from the Renaissance to today, set to music by composer and bassist Jean Félix Mailloux. Combining chamber music, lyrical song, and jazz, the program featured standout vocals by Coral Egan. Winner of the 2025 OPUS Award, the concert was widely praised as a moving and unforgettable tribute to feminine creativity.



Diogo Ramos: *Cabaça*

On July 10, the library's first Summer in the City concert featured Brazilian-born Diogo Ramos and his musicians. Due to thunderstorm warnings, the performance was moved indoors to the Harold Greenspon Auditorium. Presented as part of le Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée, the concert included songs from Ramos's latest album *Cabaça* and earlier works. The lively show, which featured audience participation and an encore, received rave reviews.



Kleyn Kabaret: *On Memories*

On July 24, an outdoor summer concert featured Damian Nisenson and his seven-member ensemble, Kleyn Kabaret, performed as part of le Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée. The performance showcased songs from Kleyn Kabaret's debut album, *De Mémoire* delivered by accomplished musicians from Montreal's world, classical, and jazz scenes.



Musicians of the World: *Jazz and Symphony*

On August 10, the library's third Summer in the City concert featured the Musicians of the World Symphony Orchestra under Joseph Milo, with soprano Olivia Hancinsky-Charette, tenor Mike Melino, and violinist Olga Murysina. Due to extreme heat warnings, the performance was moved indoors to the Harold Greenspon Auditorium. The orchestra and soloists delivered an exceptional, lively, and highly praised concert.

A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

Lachine Concert Band: *Magical Melodies*

On August 17, the Lachine Concert Band presented *Magical Melodies*, welcoming attendees of all ages. The band, made up of enthusiastic amateur musicians—many from Côte Saint-Luc—performed a medley of Disney, Broadway, Harry Potter, and Leonard Cohen music.

A Tribute to Jazz Legend Oliver Jones

On October 26, the Library celebrated the legendary career of Côte Saint-Luc's own Oliver Jones with a special tribute concert. Mayor Brownstein served as Master of Ceremonies as Taurey Butler (piano), Éric Lagacé (bass), and Jim Doxas (drums) performed live, joined by Ranee Lee—who received a heartfelt



birthday serenade—and a debut from young pianist Nate Kunin. The afternoon concluded with an interview by George Doxas, offering insight into Oliver's remarkable journey and enduring impact on jazz. Oliver was presented with a framed photograph of the bench installed in Ashkelon Gardens behind the library, honoring his lifetime of musical achievement and celebrating his legacy for generations to come.

Jennifer Gasoi: *Celebration of Light—A Holiday Concert*

On December 7, the Library presented a holiday concert, *Celebration of Light*, featuring Grammy



Award winner and two-time Juno nominee Jennifer Gasoi. The audience enthusiastically sang and danced along to holiday and winter-themed songs while Jennifer's original song *I'm a Bubble* was a highlight, with bubbles delighting young attendees. Following the sold-out concert, she signed CDs and took photos with children, while the festive atmosphere continued with the Christmas Tree lighting, creating a joyful community celebration.



Dawn Tyler Watson: *Blues and Beyond*

On December 3, Montreal-based singer and songwriter Dawn Tyler Watson, a JUNO award-winning jazz and blues artist, performed in collaboration with the Women's Social Club. Known for her dynamic and engaging performances, Dawn connected with attendees through crowd favourites like *Ring of Fire*, *Summertime*, and *Blue Christmas*, as well as holiday classics, closing with *Let the Good Times Roll* and *Those Were the Days*. The interactive performance, including strolling through the audience, delighted attendees, who shared enthusiastic appreciation for the event.

A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

FILM SCREENINGS

The Library's film programs continued to provide engaging cultural experiences throughout the year. **Friday Afternoon at the Movies** offered monthly blockbusters that entertained and inspired, featuring selections often tied to seasonal and heritage themes, from Black History Month to Jewish Heritage Month. *Dog Man*, based on Dav Pilkey's popular comic book series, offered a fun, comedic story about family and friendship and was one of the Library's most popular family screenings of the year.

The Bright Lights Film Club remained one of the Library's most intellectually engaging programs. Led by volunteer Gayle Cohen, MFA, each screening is introduced with context and followed by in-depth discussions that explore directors, critics, and cinematic analysis.

Together, these programs demonstrate the library's dedication to accessible cultural enrichment, combining entertainment with thoughtful discussion and fostering meaningful community engagement through film.

PERFORMANCES



Theatre-in-the-Park: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

On August 5, Theatre-in-the-Park drew a large audience to enjoy *The Importance of Being Earnest*, produced by Repercussion Theatre and Persephone Productions in collaboration with le Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée. Under new Artistic Director Catherine Savoie, the professional team delivered a polished and engaging performance, complete with costumes, props, and well-timed comedic moments. Families and regular attendees enjoyed the event on rented chairs or blankets, with concessions and merchandise available, making it a lively and memorable community gathering.



A CENTRE FOR ART AND CULTURE

EXHIBITS



Harvey Segal



Carol Rabinovitch

Main Art Gallery

In March, the Library launched a Call for Submissions for the 2025–2026 main exhibit space, with a renewed focus on showcasing local artists. The updated guidelines aim to strengthen community engagement by highlighting Côte Saint-Luc talent.

Throughout the year, the Library showcased local artists through a series of exhibits and *Meet the Artist* events. Multi-disciplinary artist and long-time library volunteer Carol Rabinovitch presented *Then and Now*, featuring works from the start of her career alongside recent whimsical pieces, highlighting her artistic evolution and deep connection to the library community. Côte Saint-Luc resident and pastel artist Harvey Segal exhibited impressionist landscapes, still lifes, and portraits, with a special emphasis on musicians. These are just two of the memorable exhibits featured in the library's 2025 Art Gallery program.



Suzanne Perl

Community Art Space

Throughout the year, the library presented a series of engaging art exhibits showcasing the work of local artists and community groups. The year began with an exhibition by Suzanne Perl, a regular library participant and retired art therapist.

The Library also hosted an exhibit displaying 41 pastel works by 15 of Harvey Segal's students. This was followed by an exhibit from the Côte Saint-Luc Men's Club, which presented a diverse selection of oil paintings, watercolours, and acrylic works.

Another exhibit featured Côte Saint-Luc artist Linda Freeman, who presented a collection of country scenes focused on cottages and gardens. The year concluded with an installation by local art and drama teacher Christopher Taylor, who combined drawings and photographs into a cohesive visual presentation.

These exhibits supported local artists, provided creative inspiration for the community, and reinforced the library's role as a vibrant cultural hub.

Bonsai Exhibit

Now in its seventh year, on October 19, the Art Gallery hosted its annual Bonsai exhibit, showcasing ten large-scale bonsai trees alongside three miniature specimens. Bonsai artist Rafael Najmanovitch spent the day demonstrating pruning techniques and answering visitors' questions.



FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

LITERARY PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS

An Afternoon with Marc Garneau

On January 12, the Library hosted *An Afternoon with Marc Garneau*, to celebrate his book *A Most Extraordinary Ride: Space, Politics, and the Pursuit of a Canadian Dream*. Marc Garneau, the first Canadian in space and a former federal cabinet minister, was interviewed by Tarah Schwartz about his diverse career, personal experiences, and commitments—including candid reflections on family life and the importance of mental health.



This program later held special significance as one of Garneau’s final public appearances before his passing on June 4, 2025, marking a meaningful community moment with a respected Canadian leader whose legacy continues to inspire.

An Afternoon with Edeet Ravel

On Sunday, March 23, the Library launched the young adult novel *Miss Matty* with Montreal author Edeet Ravel, in partnership with Linda Leith Publishing and Babar Books. Edeet was interviewed by journalist Tarah Schwartz, discussing her research process, sharing a short reading, and answering insightful questions.



Côte Saint-Luc Reads

On September 29, the Library presented its annual *Côte Saint-Luc Reads* program, featuring *The Paris Express* by Emma Donoghue as the selected title and bringing the community together for an evening celebrating literature. The Library recognized the support of its donors and partners, including HarperCollins Canada, Paragraphe Bookstore, Edgewood Florist, Pâtisserie Lavande, Alex Montagnon (“Trainman”), and pianist and Côte Saint-Luc resident Seon Park.

Moderator Tarah Schwartz led a thoughtful discussion with Ms. Donoghue on her writing career, immigration experience, and creative process, highlighting her literary achievements. The event was well received and generated strong interest in Ms. Donoghue’s works, which were made available for purchase through Librairie Paragraphe Bookstore.



FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL



You've Gotta Read This!

This popular staff driven program, held on June 25, featured reading recommendations from librarians including Library Director Janine West, who shared favourite summer and upcoming reads across multiple genres. Building on the program's success, a fall edition was held on November 12. Librarians again presented seasonal reading recommendations, with a focus on new fall titles. Participants expressed strong appreciation for the curated booklists and take-home handouts. The expansion of this program reflects its value in supporting readers' advisory services and fostering an engaged community of readers.



Canada Reads: Côte Saint-Luc Edition 2025

On March 26, the Library hosted *Canada Reads: Côte Saint-Luc Edition 2025*. Five librarian panelists each defended a book aligned with the CBC theme, "One Book to Change the Narrative," in a lively debate. Danielle Bélanger's defense of *Dandelion* was voted winner, with Jennifer Eisman's *Watch Out for Her* as runner-up. Finalist books and a CBC Canada Reads bag were raffled to attendees. The program fostered literary discussion, critical thinking, and community engagement around Canadian literature.

LITERARY PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN

Early Literary Programming

In September 2025, the Library expanded its early childhood programming by launching *Toddler Time with La La Lesley* and redesigning the long-running *Rhyme & Music* program into *Baby Rhyme Time*. This restructuring created developmentally appropriate programming for infants (birth to 15 months) and toddlers (16 to 36 months).

Led by former daycare educator Lesley Sherman, each program now features age-specific songs, movement, and early literacy activities. In addition, *Toddler Time* was scheduled on Sunday morning to improve access for working families. These changes created calmer environments for babies and more engaging, movement-rich sessions for toddlers, demonstrating the library's commitment to responsive and high-quality early literacy programming.

FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL



The Roslyn and Max Margles Young Writers' Contest

On May 9, the Library organized the *Roslyn and Max Margles Young Writers' Contest* celebration, bringing together children and families to honor local young talent. Over 60 children submitted their work, with 10 selected winners.

Awards were presented by Roslyn Margles, Mayor Brownstein, Councilor Cohen, and the contest judges—Quebec authors Anne Renaud, Marie-Louise Gay, and Paul Bracegirdle.

Each child received a certificate, notebook, and pencil, and first and second place winners also received gift certificates generously donated by Livres Babar Books. The event was covered in local media, including an interview by Councillor Mike Cohen with participating writers and a feature by Joel Goldenberg in *The Suburban* on May 28.



TD Summer Reading Club

The TD Summer Reading Club launched on June 26 and saw strong early engagement, with 86 children registered by June 30. In total, 195 children and teens from birth to age 17 participated surpassing the number of registrants in previous years. Program elements included weekly scavenger hunts and trivia draws, passport stamps for each visit, reading calendars to track daily reading, and donated prizes.

The program concluded with a closing celebration attended by approximately 75 children and their families. All participants received certificates and gifts, with additional donated books, t-shirts, and prizes awarded to those who completed and returned their reading passports.

The Summer Reading Club plays a critical role in preventing summer reading loss by helping children maintain literacy skills, build daily reading habits, and remain connected to the library during the school break. By making reading fun, rewarding, and family-friendly, the program supports learning continuity while reinforcing the library as a welcoming and essential community space.



FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING FOR ALL

Memorable Storytimes

Three themed storytimes offered young children and their families engaging experiences that combined storytelling, movement, bilingual reading, and hands-on creative activities.

In August, *Stuffie Storytime* invited children to bring a stuffed animal to share the experience. Stories incorporated movement, sound, and visual exploration, followed by a craft where children designed “travel pods” and passports for their stuffies. An overnight “library adventure,” documented with photos and a short story sent home, extended the experience beyond the program.

October’s *Dino Egg-spedition Storytime* featured dinosaur-themed stories, rhymes, and bilingual reading in English and French. A science-based craft allowed children to dissolve “dinosaur eggs” with vinegar to reveal hidden dinosaurs and make fossil imprints in clay, introducing basic scientific concepts in a playful way.

In November, *Wild About Animals Storytime* explored savannah animals through interactive voting games, visual literacy exercises, bilingual story reading, and measuring children’s height against animal growth charts. The session concluded with creative mask-making to reinforce learning through art.

Together, these storytimes promoted early literacy, curiosity, creativity, and bilingual exposure while fostering meaningful connections between children, caregivers, and the library.



Children’s Author-Illustrator Visit

Forty-five grade 2 students from JPPS and Merton schools visited the library to hear Hala Tahboub read her new picture book *The Interrupted Plans of Mango and Nan*, which she both wrote and illustrated. The reading was followed by a Q&A session with the children, then a craft where the students were able to design their own ice cream flavours. Students also participated in a scavenger hunt. Each class was sent home with a signed copy of Hala Tahboub’s book.

COME CELEBRATE WITH US

Public Libraries Week

As part of Public Libraries Week, the Library hosted a pop-up information and coffee kiosk in the atrium. Staffed by senior library staff, the kiosk served as a welcoming point of contact for visitors and successfully increased awareness of library programs. The complimentary coffee was warmly received and helped create positive, informal engagement with patrons, reinforcing the library's visibility and approachability within the community.



On October 21, *The Girl and the Dog and Other Shapeshifting Tales* was presented by the Montreal Intercultural Storytelling Festival as part of Public Libraries Week. Jan Blake, a Manchester-based storyteller, captivated audiences with two traditional West African tales that explored themes of beauty, power, and transformation. Through expressive storytelling, call-and-response, song, movement, and audience participation, she created an immersive and memorable experience. Held under a single spotlight, the performance highlighted the library's role in celebrating cultural storytelling, oral traditions, and intercultural exchange.



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Tea Time with Kaoso

On Sunday, July 13, the Library hosted an enchanting Tea time inspired by *Alice in Wonderland* and the Mad Hatter. The staff transformed the storytime area into a whimsical Alice tent, welcoming children into a world of games, jokes, and personal interactions with the beloved characters. While waiting for their turn, children enjoyed giant Jenga, tic-tac-toe, and Connect Four, all while sipping dainty cups of lemonade served by volunteers. Originally planned for Ashkelon Gardens, the event moved indoors due to thunderstorms, but the magical atmosphere kept the excitement and wonder alive for all attendees.

COME CELEBRATE WITH US



Harry Potter's Birthday Party

On Thursday, July 31, the Library hosted its largest Harry Potter's Birthday celebration to date, welcoming 228 participants. Volunteers worked with the library staff to prepare decorations and deliver a variety of activities, including face painting, wand-making, a Horcrux scavenger hunt, house sorting, and potions demonstrations led by McGill Chemistry Outreach.

The event was warmly received by children, teens, and families, who praised its organization and the balance between fun and learning. The chemistry activities, supported by four volunteers including long-standing library volunteer and Youth Leadership award recipient Roni Juran, were a highlight, inspiring curiosity and enthusiasm among participants.

Halloween Party

The 2025 Halloween Party drew the biggest crowd yet, with over 250 people in attendance over the hour-and-a-half event. This year's activities included a revamped Haunted House, Trick-or-Treating with a Scavenger Hunt, a colouring activity, face painting with Louna, and the Pumpkin Patch, a mini pumpkin decorating activity. Parents and grandparents commented that they were impressed by the scope of the event. The team's efforts once again paid off, with staff and volunteers working to decorate the department in an increasingly intricate way to create an immersive and fun destination for families, children, and teens.

