

T.B. SCOTT FREE LIBRARY

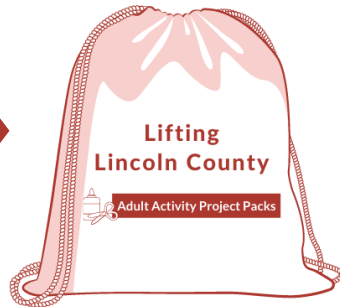
2021 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR IMPACT

The T. B. Scott Free Library continued to provide valued services and programming to the Merrill area community through outreach and innovative technology as the pandemic continued in 2021. We remained committed to the Library's core objectives: promotion of reading, provide reliable information, encourage life-long learning, and network with the community to provide programs and services.

**500+ Adult
Outreach
Project Packs**



**800+
Youth Services
Activity Bags**

9,681

Registered Borrowers

Physical Items
Checked Out

100,307

25,776

Digital Items
Checked Out

Program Attendance
51 in-person/virtual programs

911

28,790

Wireless Internet Use

Library Circulation

Based on Check Outs by Patron Residence

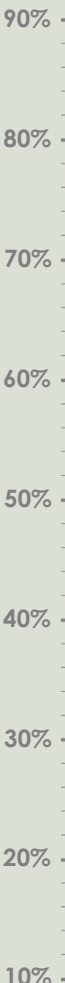
Total Physical Items
Checked Out
100,307

Outside of V-Cat
153

Other V-Cat Libraries
9,205

County
44,028

City
46,921



40,116

visits made to
T.B. Scott Library*



44,215

visits made to
tbscottlibrary.org

Total Library Visits

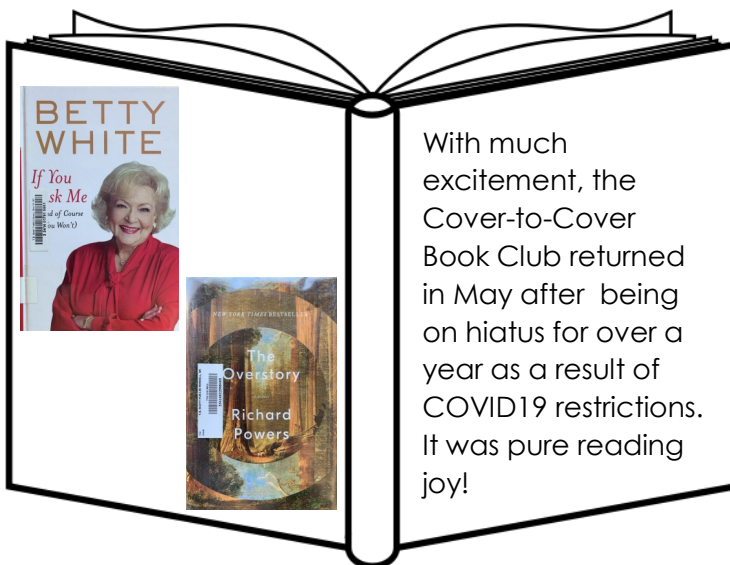
84,331

*open to the public for
46 weeks due to Covid-19

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Promote and encourage community members of all ages to discover the joy of reading and to become lifelong readers.

COVER-TO-COVER BOOK CLUB RETURNS



EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



T.B. Scott Free Library partners with Merrill Area Public Schools as well as Trinity School and local daycare centers. We support teachers and youth through classroom visits and material curation for classroom and student use. These partnerships continue to grow even through the most difficult times, in particular, a pandemic:

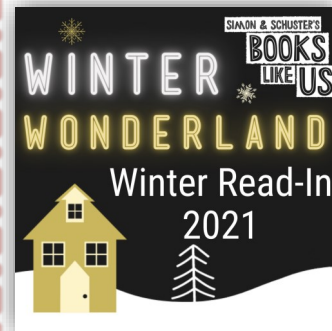
- Classroom visits continued for book checkout with safety protocols in place.
- Staff gathered books for classroom libraries.
- Early childhood students viewed Storytime from their classrooms and received student activity bags for classroom or home activities.

Themed Book Bag Requests

Teachers = 196

Items Requested = 4,174

GET READING! : SEASONAL READING PROGRAMS



Winter 2021 Adult Readers

Adults = 29
Books read = 246
Badges awarded = 168

Summer 2021 Adult Readers

Adults = 70
Books read = 578
Badges awarded = 313

Beanstack, a library-based online reading program, played an integral part in supporting and motivating patrons of all ages to read for enjoyment.



The Adult 2021 Winter READ was sponsored by Simon & Schuster, which offered additional incentives to complete the challenge.

The Summer Reading Program continued to be successful on Beanstack for the second year in a row. We offered three different reading challenges for kids and teens, which required them to read 8 hours in order to enter tickets for some pretty amazing prizes. Adult readers rose to the reading challenge and enjoyed themed sponsored events along the way. The ease and convenience of logging in through Beanstack, which also offers a mobile app, contributed to the increase in participation.



Summer 2021 Youth Readers

Youth = 309

Teens = 30

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Promote, support, and serve as a center for the practice & development of civic discourse, helping to develop responsible citizens by infusing a sense of the importance of democracy

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Whether in person or via virtual platforms, the Library continued to develop programming in 2021 that fostered civic engagement and the importance of democracy for all ages. Collaborative efforts from outside the community brought depth and breadth to the discussions.



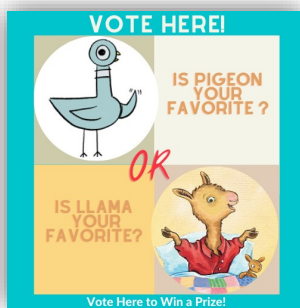
#DISCOVER MERRILL

Community engagement continued in 2021 with the Merrill Aware & Active Citizens Group as they completed the project to develop a complimentary #DiscoverMerrill StoryMap Walk for residents



and visitors, which can be accessed with the QR code provided here. The project was introduced to the greater community with an Assembly at the Merrill Agri Pavilion on Thursday, August 12. The project was made possible through a grant received from Wisconsin Humanities. Library and community member involvement in this project has opened many doors to future grants with Wisconsin Humanities. Dena Wortzel, Executive Director of Wisconsin Humanities, complimented the library and its community members. The hope is to duplicate these efforts in small communities throughout Wisconsin.

YOUTH & DEMOCRACY DEMONSTRATED



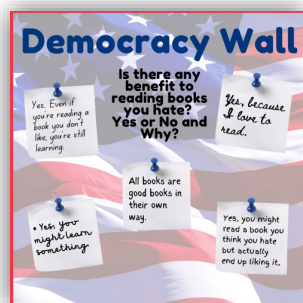
In November, children participated in two different opportunities to help understand the importance of democracy.

Children age 11 and

under held a mock election involving two popular book characters, Pigeon and Llama. They were able to cast their vote in order to experience one of the cornerstones of our democracy. Children age 12 and up responded to the "Democracy Wall" question: "Is there an advantage to reading a book you hate?"

Yes or No.

Participants were encouraged to provide an anonymous answer and the opinions were added to the Democracy Wall for



IMMIGRATION JOURNEY

With a great deal of collaboration and patience on the part of Wisconsin Humanities, the library was able to host the traveling exhibit **Immigrant Journeys from South of the Border**. The exhibit provided a tiny glimpse into the life of immigrants from Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, and Uruguay. The personal stories in the exhibit offered opportunities for reflection and conversation to deepen our understanding of immigrants' lives and the cultural richness they bring to our area and statewide.



WISCONSIN
HUMANITIES

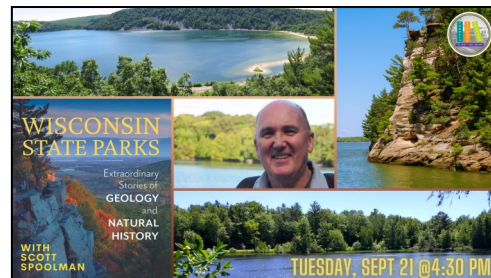
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Develop and execute programming, serving a broad range of ages and interests, expanding our awareness of diversity in our community

MEETING THE NEEDS OF A DIVERSE COMMUNITY



~ ADULT SERVICES ~



The library continued to be innovative with programming in 2021. The purchase of a new large outdoor program tent offered up opportunities for outdoor programs during the warmer months. What better way to learn about Wisconsin State Parks and delve into the history of the Native Americans from our area. Youth Services made magic happen for the young and old on the library lawn with "The

Magic of Isaiah." And we took programming out to area businesses and enjoyed the outdoor seating they provided for program attendees.

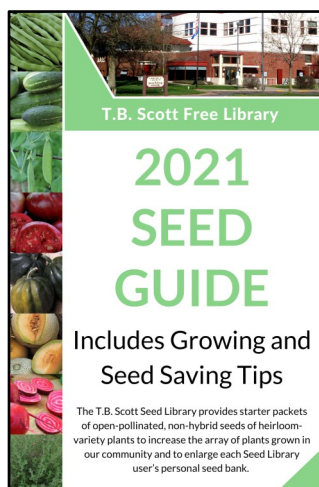


~ YOUTH SERVICES ~



COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

~ OUTREACH SERVICES ~



As the Library sought out new ways to meet community needs, we made connections with area non-profit groups and organizations. Youth Services joined forces with Lincoln County 4-H to bring a fanciful and flighty program highlighting the life of Butterflies. From Adult Services there grew a down-to-earth program, "Pizza Garden Fun," which

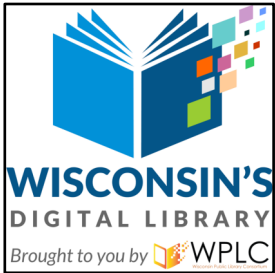
brought in horticulturist Marissa Ashbeck from the Monk Botanical Garden in Wausau, Wisconsin. This was a family event brought to patrons in their homes as a virtual event.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Provide collections, digital resources, and technology resources responsive to community interests and needs

TECHNOLOGY PIVOT



Wisconsin libraries invested a great deal of effort to enrich library digital collections statewide. T.B. Scott Free Library furthered those efforts and shifted resources to Wisconsin's Digital Library platform, which in turn benefited patrons. In partnership with the Job Center of Wisconsin, the Department of Workforce Development, and Wisconsin Workforce Development Boards, Wisconsin DPI developed a toolbox of resources for public libraries to support job seekers who come to the library for such assistance.



VIRTUAL EVENTS

Technology continued to play an integral part of library programming in 2021. Facebook Live and YouTube Live along with archived recordings became a mainstay for program engagement. The library contracted with numerous performers that pivoted to online programming from their homes or studios. Children at home, day care centers, and schools interacted with and joined in some great fun with entertainers from around the United States. One program attendee mentioned how enjoyable it was for her and her children to attend the virtual events while "in our pajamas!" While library staff realized that in-person programming could never be replaced by the virtual world, they were happy to hear of the joy that patrons were experiencing while having fun from their own homes. Adult patrons had an opportunity to enjoy music from the Library during the "Music You Love" event via Facebook Live. Local music artist Steve Strassman, Jr., graced the 3rd floor with his presence and filled the Library with wonderful tunes.

MUSIC LIVE FROM THE LIBRARY



CHECK OUT TO TECH OUT OR TO SIMPLY UNPLUG

The Library's "Suggest a Purchase" program brought great additions to the Adult Department "Library of Things." The "Things" offer patrons the opportunity to try out new hobbies or recreational devices before making the decision to purchase on their own. Some items are suited for one-time use and the "Library of

Things" is the perfect resource for the job. Items can satisfy the desire to try something techy or the need to simply unplug and enjoy the music of life. In 2021, the Library added a metal detector and ukulele. Youth Services revamped the Learning Games collection. There are both tactile learning games and STEAM kits for lots of at-home fun. They make great checkouts for weekend visitors like the grandkids and other family and friends.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

Promote and encourage use of the library as a safe, comfortable, and welcoming place to meet and interact with others

FINE FREE



Wednesday, November 17, 2021, was a monumental day for T. B. Scott Free Library and its patrons. They went fine-free. Patrons are no longer charged late fines for overdue materials, and existing fines were purged from T. B. Scott patron records. While T. B. Scott

Free Library is the first local library to eliminate late fines, this change follows a nationwide trend set by New York Public Library, Madison Public Library, and others. Late fines present a barrier to the most vulnerable in our community, including children, the elderly, and the disabled: the very people who need the library the most. And, surprisingly, late fines are not very effective in getting people to return materials on time. Patrons are still financially responsible for lost and damaged materials.

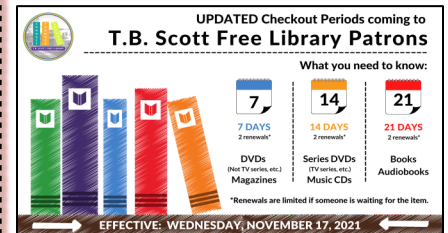
TOUCH-A-TRUCK EVENT



In celebration of National Firefighters Day, Youth Services hosted a Touch-a-Truck event and featured local fireman in a special virtual Family Storytime. For the Touch-a-Truck event, families had the opportunity to reserve a time for a one-on-one tour of one of Merrill's newest firetrucks. The event was loads of fun for the kids! We are thankful to the Merrill firefighters for taking time out of their day for this event and keeping our community safe.



MATERIAL ACCESSIBILITY






In order to better serve all community members and be a good neighbor to other surrounding libraries in the area, the Library adjusted **Checkout Periods** for library materials to be in better alignment with checkout periods for other public libraries in our area. Patrons were informed of these changes via social media and provided in-house informational handouts. Patrons were encouraged to contact the library for further details or any questions that they may have had at the time.

SUMMER FOOD SUMMER FUN : OUTDOOR STYLE

The Library, once again, served as a USDA Summer Food Service Program site during the summer of 2021. Lunch was served curbside at the Library, Monday – Wednesday from June 8—July 21. In addition to a grab-n-go lunch, children were offered a free book to keep them reading and learning all summer. "This program fills a void created when school lunches are not available," said Youth Services Librarian Andrea Bennett. "Enjoying a healthy lunch while reading on the library lawn provides a holistic approach to lifetime learning. Helping parents meet the nutritional needs of their children while providing literacy fun is the strength of this program."





 @TBScottFreeLibrary
 @tbscottlibrary_merrill
 @TBLibrary

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tbscottlibrary.org

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MISSION STATEMENT

Serving the Merrill area through traditional and innovative services, T.B. Scott Free Library connects people to their community and the world, promotes literacy and civic engagement, encourages and supports life-long learning, ensures free and open access to ideas, and provides opportunities for recreation.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Friends Purpose:

- ◆ To support the T.B. Scott Free Library in developing its facilities and services for the community.
- ◆ To encourage gifts and bequests to the library.
- ◆ To stimulate support and use of the library.
- ◆ To promote knowledge of the functions, services, resources and needs of the library.
- ◆ To enjoy the fellowship of library friends.

2021 Fundraiser

