

THE PHOENICIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY FOR 2007

As of April 1, 2008



THE PHOENICIA LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of The Phoenicia Library is to provide and maintain access to a world of enlightening and educational resources in all media. We strive for excellence in all areas of service to our community and recognize our responsibility to encourage a life-long love of learning in our community's children. We wish to provide a welcoming and safe space for all ages as well as guidance in the pursuit of knowledge.

THE PHOENICIA LIBRARY - MORE THAN A LIBRARY

"[The Phoenicia Library] is the social center of this great town – I love this library everyone is lovely and helpful and fun. I think the Phoenicia Library with a little help from the community could help make Phoenicia all it could be!! It brings out the best in the community."

In November and December of 2007, the Phoenicia Library Association distributed surveys throughout the Town of Shandaken to find out what people liked and disliked about the Phoenicia Library and what they thought about our plans for the future. Throughout this report you will see people's responses to the survey quoted to highlight a point or add an insight. The quotation above describes what the Board of the Phoenicia Library hopes it can be, a library that provides excellent library services, and more. Many survey respondents shared this feeling that the **Phoenicia Library is "more than a library," it is the "heart of Phoenicia."**

But first, we are a library, with all that a 21st-century library should provide:

- **12,658 books** on-site as of the end of 2007, and access to 1.7 million more through the Mid-Hudson Library System
- **636 videos and CDs**
- **424 audio recordings (books and music)**
- **five computers with free internet access and twenty special databases**
- **children's computer with games and educational programs**
- **the largest collection of circulating fishing books in the Northeast**

In addition, we have reading kits and even fishing poles that can be checked out with your library card, a local history collection, and magazines. The library holds craft classes and other programs and events throughout the year.

What makes us special, "more than a library"? We are not the type of library most of us grew up with, hushed and stuffy. At the Phoenicia Library, conversations and laughter are encouraged. Only at the Phoenicia Library is there a strict anti-shushing policy. Only at the Phoenicia Library does an entering dog get greeted with a dog biscuit. Only at the Phoenicia Library does a sick lamb get brought to math class, or are entering patrons requested to lie down on the floor to participate in a junior high school science experiment.

Most importantly, what makes us special is our staff and you, the people of the Town of Shandaken.

According to the survey, the Library's strongest asset is its **"excellent staff", who make it a "people-friendly place," full of "warmth"**. Members of the staff "offer extremely helpful research assistance." One patron stated,

"When I enter I am welcomed with a smile, by name, and everyone goes out of their way to be helpful. Many who work or volunteer there know my tastes in reading, and I have found several new 'favorite' authors due to their suggestions."

The people of the Town of Shandaken are another of our great assets. We could not accomplish our special programs or even some of our everyday operations without the assistance of our volunteers and donors. A list of donors and volunteers in 2007 is attached at the end of this report, but it does not, and cannot, include everyone who has helped out – the people who drop a dollar (or a twenty) in our donations jar, or say “keep the change” when paying for printing or making copies, the people who help when a student comes in with a question that the staff can’t readily answer, the people who carry cartons of books in and out.

All of you who have helped, we thank with deep appreciation.

Beyond that, the patrons contribute to the special nature of our library by their friendliness and helpfulness. If a mother comes in frazzled by her teenage kids, the staff and other patrons give her advice and sympathy. The patron next to you in jeans and a sweatshirt might be a contractor willing to give a word of advice on your home repair problem, or a lawyer willing to help you write an important letter.

The Phoenicia Library is where the Town of Shandaken becomes a community.

IT’S NOT PERFECT - BUT WE’RE WORKING ON IT

Of course, not everything is wonderful at the library. When asked, “What do you like the least about the Phoenicia Library?”, lack of space was the biggest issue, with nearly half of the survey respondents complaining: “too small,” “too crowded,” “need more space,” “it’s really difficult to see the books.” The next most frequent area of complaint was the physical condition of the building (“dilapidated,” “needs repair,” “smelly”), and the third most frequent was the book collection, where people wanted a “broader selection,” especially non-fiction, and fewer best-sellers. When asked, “Is there anything the library could do that would make you likely to use it more often?”, “more hours” was cited most frequently. A full list of survey responses to these and other survey questions can be examined at the library.

Our Response:

For four weeks in March of 2008, the library was closed for renovations. The structure of the building was strengthened at every level to remedy the deterioration of age. The heating system was improved and insulation added in order to cut down energy usage. Walls were repainted with environmentally-sound paint, the worn, dusty carpet was removed and a beautiful wood floor revealed. Bookshelves and computers were rearranged to improve patron access. The computers were rewired. Though we cannot provide handicapped access to the entire building, the entryway is handicapped accessible, and we moved our large-print books there for the convenience of our senior citizens. In May, we will have the outside of the building painted and a new exterior sign installed.

As discussed more fully below, we are making a strong effort to increase and broaden our collections of books, videos and CDs. **If you have any suggestions for books or CDs we should acquire, or for additional activities or anything else, please let us know.**

There's a limit to how much we can accomplish in our present space, so we are also looking for new space in downtown Phoenicia, where we can create a library that is larger, with more resources, more places to sit and read, or study, or hang out with friends, or use computers. (We probably cannot adequately expand on our current property due to the septic system and the size of the lot.) A downtown Phoenicia location was the choice of 95% of survey respondents who had an opinion on this question, and also follows proven library planning practices. It has been shown in many communities nationwide that **a downtown location is good for the library, and a library is good for the downtown.**

LOOKING AT THE NUMBERS

Circulation Statistics	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Adult Fiction Books	4,447	4,804
Adult Non-Fiction Books	2,304	2,285
Adult Other Materials (videos, DVDs, etc.)	3,968	4,183
Total Adult Circulation	10,719	11,272
Children's Fiction Books	3,049	2,697
Children's Non-Fiction Books	1,040	931
Subtotal Children's Books	4,089	3,628
Children's Other Materials	961	993
Total Children's Circulation	<u>5,050</u>	<u>4,621</u>
Total Circulation	15,769	15,893

In addition, in 2007 our public internet-access computers were used 2,564 times.

Over the past few years, the Phoenicia Library has made more of an effort to reach out to children with the summer reading program, craft programs during the year, and Letter Friends. The positive results of these efforts are visible in the increase of over 10% in circulation of children's materials from 2006 to 2007.

On the other hand, our total circulation has dropped a very slight amount (less than 1%). This is due to decreases in adult circulation of fiction books and non-book materials. Both of these areas are being addressed, with an aggressive weeding of adult fiction books to make room for increased purchases of new fiction, and purchase of more DVDs and videos.

NEW MATERIALS ADDED IN 2007

771 books

237 videos and DVDS

New Information Services: NOVELny (New York Online Virtual Electronic Library), provided by the New York State Library, connects library patrons to a wealth of information, for free. Just go to our website, **phoenicia.lib.ny.us** and click on

NOVELny, or directly on the buttons for popular databases such as Price It and Heritage Quest Online.

You can also access The New York Times, Consumer Reports, Chilton Auto Repair Guides, town, state and federal tax information, STAR property tax exemption rules, voter registration information, bus schedules and more from our website.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES AT PHOENICIA LIBRARY IN 2007

In 2007, our activities and programs, including reading readiness, the Summer Reading Program, crafts and story-reading, included 44 children's programs sessions, 16 adult, and 5 young adult. Total program attendance was 482.

Meet the Letter Friends, the enjoyable reading readiness program, met on Saturdays during the school year. This free program, led by Sue Bernstein, introduces children aged 3 to 5 to each letter of the alphabet and the letter's most frequently used sound in a continuous story, one letter each week.

The Book Club, led by Melissa Thongs, met to discuss The Devil and Miss Prym by Paulo Coelho.

There were several sessions of **Valentine Card-Making**, in which both children and adults made Valentine's Day Cards with materials provided by the library. Each person was allowed to keep one card he or she had made, and the rest were sold for the benefit of the library for \$1 apiece, at the library itself and at helpful stores throughout town. This is always one of our most fun and popular programs.

An **Origami** class for adults was led by Library Director Regina Johnson and Veronica Rowe.

Fly-Tying Classes open to teenagers and adults were led by Hank Rope in the Angler's Parlor on the second floor of the Library, home of the Jerry Bartlett Angling Collection, one of the prizes of the Phoenicia Library.

The 2007 **Summer Reading Program** at the Phoenicia Library, "Get a Clue", used contests, crafts and fun with their friends to keep kids reading and learning during the summer. Studies show that children who don't read over the summer lose literacy skills, while those who do read, improve, so this is one of the most important programs we offer.

At the **Thanksgiving Story and Craft** and the **Holiday Story and Ornament-Making Event**, both for children. Library Director Regina Johnson read a story aloud and then helped children make crafts appropriate to the holidays.

Our annual **Holiday Party** is fun for all ages, with an origami class for older children and adults, holiday crafts for younger children, holiday stories read aloud, live music, refreshments, and an appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus.

2007 Final Operating Budget and Proposed 2008 Budget

(Since the 2007 Final Operating Budget was prepared when the 2008 budget was adopted, before all final expenses were known, some numbers had to be estimated, but are believed to be reliable.)

	"Actual" 2007	Proposed 2008
INCOME		
Public Funds/Shandaken	\$83,000	\$83,000
Public Funds/Onteora School District	3,500	3,500
NYS Library Aid	1,500	1,500
NYS Summer Reading Grant (Cahill)	1,620	820
NYS Special Project Grant (Bonacic)	0	0
Foundation Grants	500	1,000
Gifts, Donations, Endowments	1,815	1,500
Sale of Books, Records, DVDs	5,959	6,750
Copy, print and fax fees	1,462	1,500
Library Charges/Fines/Rentals Fundraising	13	0
Fundraising	2,634	3,000
Donations from FOPL	69	500
Miscellaneous	<u>.....10</u>	<u>.....0</u>
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$102,082	\$103,070
EXPENSES		
Wages (inc.w/holding and FICA)*	\$42,952	\$56,534
FICA Employer Portion	3,286	4,325
NYS Unemployment	325	468
Insurance/Disability	312	350
Insurance/Workers Comp	649	1,000
Books, Tapes, Videos Purchased	4,306	6,000
Insurance/Building & Liability	2,644	2,720
Insurance/D&O	0	1,300
Postage	220	230
Library/Office/Computer Supplies	1,325	1,375
Telephone	1,180	1,225
Electricity	965	1,050
Fuel Oil	1,770	2,225
Outside Services/Cleaning	624	2,700
Outside Services/Trash Pickup Outside	422	422
Services/Bookkeeping	2,220	2,700
Outside Services/Snow, Lawn, Misc	50	200
Equipment	300	350
Equipment Maintenance	0	435
Travel Expense/Workshops (net)	54	200
Fundraising Expense	0	100
Bank Fees & Check Printing	130	130
Repairs	0	500
MHLS ProQuest (database)	99	105
Web Hosting	250	250
Circulation	1,005	981
Rotating Collections	150	150
Dues	75	100
Program Expense	219	400
Misc. Expense	<u>.....202</u>	<u>.....500</u>
Total Operating Expenses	\$65,734	\$89,025
Retained Income	<u>36,348</u>	<u>14,045</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$102,082	\$103,070

*The large projected increase in wages occurred because a volunteer worked several hours a week for a few months in 2007, filling in for paid staff members who had left, and another staff member missed time due to illness. The increase in wages per hour from 2007 to 2008 was actually 4% for most employees.

Library Board, Staff, Volunteers and Donations 2007

At the beginning of 2007, our Library Board included Veronica Rowe, President, Renwick Dibbell, Mark Wilsey, Jeanne Schlosser, Melissa Thongs, Declan Feehan, Judith Singer, Emily Scully, and Katrina Klinge. Veronica, Jeanne and Katrina all retired from the Board in 2007 and we take this opportunity to thank them again for their years of dedication and hard work. At the end of the year, Board members were Melissa Thongs, President, Renwick Dibbell, Mark Wilsey, Declan Feehan, Judith Singer, Emily Scully, Barbara Redfield, Sue Bernstein, and Rebecca Ffrench.

Library Staff: Regina Johnson, Director; Molly Kilb, Debbie Spivack, Dennis Johnson

The Board of Trustees would like to thank all those who contributed time, money, and effort to the Phoenicia Library in 2007, including:

Individuals who donated money or new materials or equipment:

Doris Bartlett
Lorraine and Nicholas Della Penna
Jay Fahey
James Ffrench and Rebecca Miller Ffrench
Michael W. Mitchell
Sarah Pennachio
"Phoenicia Phirst Phriday" (Alan Fliegel and Janet Klugiewicz)
Marjorie Painting, Virginia Langan, Gertrude Muller, Doris Murphy and Mary McCloskey
Ira Silverberg and Bob Morris
Judith Singer
Dolly Shivers
Beulah Tannenbaum
John and Melissa Thongs

Individuals who donated time and effort:

Elaine Cruikshank
Sandy D'Amours
Remy Dios
Peter Cortes
Bernard Handzel
Elizabeth Mitchell
Christina Plutzer
Veronica Rowe
Michelle Spark
Anique Taylor
Matt VanNostrand

People and businesses who donated items for sale or auction at the library fair:

Mighty EEE
Anique Taylor
Cathy Neal
Bonnie Amatrano
Gail Wanger
Michelle Spark
Christie Scheele
Holly George Warren
Margaret Braun

Alamo Cantina
Al's Restaurant
Amy's Take-Away
BabyToes
Barneche Design
Black Bear Hollow
The Blue Barn
Brio's
Catskills Seasons Inn
Country Store
Hot Stuff Blown Glass

The Ice Cream Station
Lucky Chocolates
The Nest Egg
Phoenicia Liquor
Phoenicia Pharmacy
Phoenicia Supermarket
Ricciardella's
TenderLand Home
Zen Mountain Monastery

WE APOLOGIZE TO EVERYONE ELSE WHO HELPED BUT WHOSE NAME WE MAY HAVE MISSED - but all receive our most heartfelt

Thank You!