



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
October 20, 2022
4PM
Rice Public Library
AGENDA

1. Review and Approve Minutes
 - a. September 22, 2022
2. Discussion of how the Library can better serve minority users
3. Discussion of Example (Yarmouth) Strategic Plan in context of Library Strategic Plan development
 - a. Update on RFP Status
4. Next Steps
 - a. Action Items
 - b. Next Meeting

Materials:

- Freedom to Read Article – Seacoast Online
- Draft Minutes
- Yarmouth Strategic Plan



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 22, 2022
4PM
DRAFT

Present: Susan Goodman, Chair, Stephanie Wexler-Robock, Judy Spiller, Rachel Dennis, Tom Newbold, Cici Nielsen, Lindsay Burrowbridge, Lee Perkins, Kendra Amaral

1. Freedom to Read Policy
 - Minor corrections and adjustments made through discussion.
 - Vote to recommend to Council: recommended unanimously
2. Challenged Materials Procedure and form
 - Minor corrections and adjustments made through discussion.
 - Vote to approve with corrections: approved unanimously
3. RFP for Strategic Plan
 - Input provided on draft request for proposals
 - Consider a social network analysis
 - Next steps: Kendra will finalize and issue RFP in the coming weeks
4. Set Standing Meeting
 - Susan calls for a Vice Chair to support the Committee when Susan is unavailable. Rachel agrees to serve in the role.
 - Vote to make Rachel Dennis Vice Chair: approved unanimously
 - Committee agrees to hold the meetings the third Thursday of the month at 4PM at the Rice Public Library

Adjourn

Seacoastonline

LOCAL

Kittery library adopts 'Freedom to Read' as U.S. book bans surge: 'Essential to democracy'



Ian Lenahan

Portsmouth Herald

Published 5:03 a.m. ET Oct. 17, 2022

KITTERY, Maine — Town leaders have taken steps to ensure a diverse range of reading materials stay on shelves of the historic Rice Public Library as book banning efforts have surged nationally.

A formal “Freedom to Read” policy was adopted by the Town Council at its Oct. 12 meeting. “The freedom to read is essential to our democracy,” the policy states in part.

“The Town of Kittery is devoted to reading and wishes to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read,” it reads. “We trust our Kittery residents to recognize propaganda and misinformation and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution.”

'You have to make a stand': Seacoast communities unite to address rising tide of hate

Approved by the Town Council in tandem with the policy was a step-by-step book challenge process, which outlines how Kittery’s Library Advisory Committee receives and evaluates contested reading materials. Only Kittery residents are permitted to initiate a challenge.

“The library considers material objectionable only if the material taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value,” the challenged materials policy reads.

Lee Perkins, the town library director since 2010, noted Rice Public Library previously followed the American Library Association’s “Freedom to Read” statement.

'Giants of Rye': Meet the creator of two-story Halloween creatures on West Road

Because the library officially became a town department in 2019, however, the Town Council had to approve the town's own "Freedom to Read" library policy "to carry forward this commitment," according to a report to the council from Town Manager Kendra Amaral.

"A formal policy is vital to providing guidance to the Library staff and Library Advisory Committee on reviewing and considering challenged materials," Amaral wrote.

Perkins said she hasn't received a book challenge during her 12 years at Rice Public Library.

How frequent are book bans occurring locally nationally?

The Associated Press reported in September the American Library Association was receiving just as many book challenges through the first eight months of this year as there were in the entirety of 2021, a year that saw the most book challenges in decades.

In Kittery: Fair Tide, Footprints Food Pantry to open Mainspring, a social services hub

Through August, the American Library Association reported 681 book challenges, revolving around 1,651 separate book titles. Last year, the association received 729 total challenges of 1,579 books.

Almost all of the books targeted by those seeking to ban them deal with race, gender or sexuality, USA Today reported. These books have been targeted by conservative groups as part of culture wars intertwined with national political strategies.

Efforts to remove books have occurred recently on the local level. In February, York's School Committee decided a book about sexual health would stay in the York Middle School library following a months-long dispute about the title, "It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health," by author Robie Harris and illustrator Michael Emberley.

Last month, the Rochester (New Hampshire) City Council rejected Councilor Jim Gray's attempt to remove four books centered around LGBTQ+ topics from the city library.

One of the books targeted in the failed effort in Rochester was "Gender Queer: A Memoir" by Maia Kobabe, a graphic novel about the author coming out as nonbinary, which was the most banned book of 2021 nationally.

Energy costs: NH Community Power Coalition aims to lower electricity bills, go greener

What does the town's 'Freedom to Read' policy say?

Kittery's "Freedom to Read" policy makes six commitments to the general public, some of which are to provide reading opportunities, consider a wide spectrum of viewpoints and thoughts and to not label any reading materials as "subversive."

One promise is to "not bar access to materials based on political or personal history."

"It is contrary to the public interest for the Rice Public Library to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author," the policy states.

What is the process of challenging reading materials in Kittery?

The seven-step procedure for town residents to challenge the library's materials first requires any objection to a book to be heard first by the person responsible for acquiring the item. "If an understanding is not reached," the policy states, then the resident can fill out a "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Book" form available at the library.

The completed form will be given to Perkins before the Library Advisory Committee begins its examination of the content in question.

Restaurant news: Wing-Itz closing original Portsmouth eatery. Owner hints at big plans to grow in Seacoast.

Before preparing a written report, the policy notes: "The Library Advisory Committee shall examine the material in question and check general acceptance of material by reading reviews, weighing values and faults, weighing evidence of specialists in the field, and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not passages or portions without context."

If the complaint still isn't resolved, the committee would then seek assistance from organizations such as the American Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee. The Library Advisory Committee will then issue a decision on the proposed ban within four to six weeks.

PEN America, a 100-year-old nonprofit working to defend freedom of expression in the United States, compiled an "Index of Book Bans" from July 2021 until June of this year.

Nationwide there were 2,532 individual cases of books being banned in that time, PEN America found, spanning 1,648 different titles.

A state-by-state breakdown of book bans in the 11-month period shows Maine had between one and 10 bans, while New Hampshire did not have any, the nonprofit found. Texas had the highest number of book bans in that time frame, with anywhere between 751 to 1,000 reading materials banned across the state.

“Bans occurred in 138 school districts in 32 states,” PEN America wrote in its findings. “These districts represent 5,049 schools with a combined enrollment of nearly 4 million students.”

The data was compiled by book bans reported directly to PEN America in addition to bans covered by the media.

Material from the Associated Press was used in this report.



**MERRILL
MEMORIAL
LIBRARY**



**STRATEGIC PLAN
2017 - 2021**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2021

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MERRILL
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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Trustees are delighted to present the Merrill Memorial Library Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2017-2021.

As you are aware, it has been a busy few years for the library. In 2013, after many years *in situ*, the Historical Society decided to vacate the third floor. They had outgrown the space and opted to move into the Water District Building on East Elm Street, freeing up the third floor in the process. This was clearly a wonderful opportunity, and the Library Director and Trustees were eager to expand into this beautiful (if faded) space.

Much work had to be done before this dream could be turned into reality, and the Trustees sprang into action. Money was needed, and we initiated a capital campaign to pay for the necessary work. This campaign was ably led by then-Board President Gro Flatebo, and we all owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for her sterling efforts. The citizens of Yarmouth voted overwhelmingly at referendum to float a \$1.5 million bond to help pay for the project and public fundraising generated in excess of \$1 million more. Thanks to everyone who gave so generously. The response to the renovation has been overwhelmingly positive, and there is universal agreement that the library looks beautiful. I am pleased to add that an additional plaudit has recently come our way: the library is the recipient of Greater Portland Landmarks' 2016 Preservation Award.

Given all the changes that have occurred at the library over the last few years, and with the renovation finished, the Trustees thought it time to embark on a Strategic Plan to help guide us through the next five years. The intent was to ascertain how we can better serve our community, help meet the needs of all our patrons and embrace the changing role that libraries play in modern society. An additional goal was to clarify and define the position of the Trustees going forward.

Great thanks are owed to all the committee members who gave so freely of their time and talents, and to everyone who provided feedback or came to a focus group or meeting. The input was extraordinary and, as expected, we discovered that Yarmouth does indeed love its library!

Yours sincerely,

Philip Jones
Trustee President



Jack Jones

Library Trustees:

Philip Jones, President; Patricia Ramsay, Vice President;
Michael Shay, Treasurer; Emily Jones and Joan Dollarhite, Co-Secretaries;
Robin Oxenhorn; Charlie Sawyer; Library Sexton: Tom Reinsborough

"Thank you for all you are doing for us and for Yarmouth."

Acknowledgments:

We wish to express our deep gratitude to the MML staff, Board of Trustees and Strategic Plan Committee for their support, commitment, enthusiasm and many contributions. Serving on the committee were:

Philip Jones, Chair & Trustee	Nissa Flanagan, Librarian	Beth Newman
Heidi Grimm, Library Director	Linda Horstmann	Patricia Ramsay, Trustee
Randall Bates, Town Councillor	David Kitchen	Carolyn Schuster
Betsy Clark	Tim Kittredge	Deb Hoadley, Consultant
Joan Dollarhite, Trustee		

A special thank you must go to the following Yarmouth stalwarts: Nathaniel Tupper, Town Manager; Michael Morrill, Police Chief; Andrew Dolloff, Superintendent of Schools; Denise Clavette, Economic Development Director; Karyn MacNeill, Yarmouth Community Services Director; and Amy Aldredge, former Yarmouth Historical Society Executive Director. All were interviewed for the plan, and helped the process along with their enthusiasm and input. Additionally many thanks are owed to Pat Thompson, the library's former Town Council liaison (and ardent supporter!) and Gro Flatebo, former Trustee President and Capital Campaign Chair. Both are among the library's best and most passionate advocates.

We'd also like to extend an enormous thank you to local Yarmouth resident Peter Small. Peter has a wealth of experience with strategic plans after many years spent as a consultant, and he gave freely of his advice, expertise and time. He interviewed the directors of seven Maine public libraries and reported back his findings to the Committee.

A big thank you is owed to Dennis Pelletier and Paul Letendre at Yarmouth Printing and Graphics who took on the task of laying out and printing this document. They were most generous and a pleasure to work with!

This plan would not have been possible without the community's input, and we want to thank everyone who participated and contributed their ideas on how the library can best serve its community going forward.

"It's a great library — wonderful people working there."



Yarmouth Historical Society

Methodology:

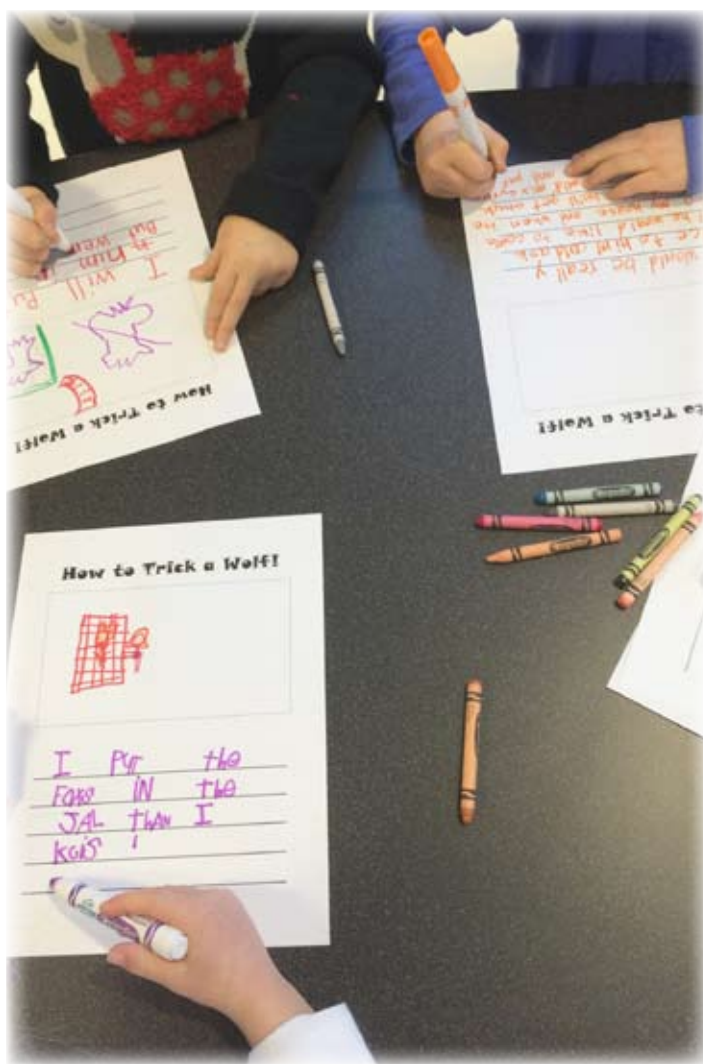
Gathering community input was central to our strategic planning process. Consultant Deb Hoadley of Hoadley Consulting was contracted to shape the process. The Strategic Planning Committee identified key demographics, framed survey questions, reviewed findings, and drafted the mission, vision and goals of the plan. Community input was solicited through community forums; targeted focus groups, including with the library staff and Board of Trustees; interviews with key community leaders; a community survey; a teen survey; and interviews with the directors of other Maine libraries. We also used library and community data and reports to assess library materials, resources, services and programs based on community demographics.

The S.O.A.R. analysis was used in focus groups and the community forums to gather constructive criticism about library services. S.O.A.R. stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results and is part of an appreciative inquiry model. This brainstorming model yields results in a positive way, and focuses thinking toward vision and outcomes, as well as what the library does well and what opportunities are possible. A community visioning exercise was also used in those groups to gather information about what we aspire to be as a community, and to address what the library may provide that is not currently being provided in Yarmouth.

We received 510 responses to the community survey and seventy-six responses to the teen survey. The community survey was distributed widely in online and paper form, with several locations including the library designated for disbursement and drop-off. The teen survey link was distributed through the schools, and paper copies were available at the library. Survey questions and a summary of the survey results may be found at the end of this document.

Peter Small interviewed the directors of seven Maine libraries identified as excellent in the services they provide their communities, namely Auburn, Biddeford, Brunswick, Camden, Freeport, Kennebunk, and the Maine State Library in Augusta. Common to these libraries are motivated staff delivering great customer service, an emphasis on programming for many different demographics, providing and teaching technology, serving as a community center and providing services to small businesses. These same factors were identified as high priorities for Merrill Memorial Library.

The plan was drafted by Philip Jones, Nissa Flanagan, Heidi Grimm, Patricia Ramsay and Deb Hoadley, with input from the Strategic Planning Committee, Board of Trustees and library staff. This plan reflects our community's desire to increase collaborative efforts, expand volunteer opportunities, allow greater access to materials from around the state, and continue to deliver excellent customer service. The strategic plan affirms our mission, vision, prioritized strategic goals, and objectives.



Background:

Merrill Memorial Library recently went through a significant renovation. The third floor received a major overhaul, the building's systems were modernized and brought into compliance, and a new covered entryway was added. The library now has 18,000 square feet of space, 7,500 cardholders and a permanent collection of 44,000 items. In 2015 our patrons borrowed 115,000 physical assets and 4,300 digital downloads. Community groups used the library's public space on eighty-seven occasions, and the library held forty programs. Amongst these was the exhibit "Celebrating Chip Chadbourn", a retrospective of the work of a well-known local artist that was a joint venture with Yarmouth Arts. Perhaps most important of all, four hundred children participated in the 2015 Summer Reading Program.

This Strategic Plan was initiated by the library's Board of Trustees who formed a Strategic Planning Committee of concerned citizens. The latter embarked on a thorough process of public input gathering. This included conducting community forums, focus groups, patron surveys for both adults and teens, and individual interviews with community leaders. The committee was particularly interested in the opinions of the library staff. Additionally, the directors of seven high-performance Maine libraries were interviewed to ascertain the steps they had taken to create successful institutions.

Purpose of the Plan:

The operation of the library is guided by its mission, vision and core principles (the latter being consistent with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights).



Building on those foundations, this document outlines the strategic direction that the library will follow over the next five years (and beyond) as MML endeavors to better serve its community, meet the needs of all its patrons and embrace the changing role that libraries play in twenty-first-century society. The plan has a strong focus on the expansion of programming and services, and on building community partnerships.

Mission:

Merrill Memorial Library is a public library that makes available to all members of the community a broad range of materials, services and information. The mission of the library is to provide our patrons with educational, recreational and cultural enrichment, and opportunities for independent learning and personal and professional growth.

The Library Trustees and staff support this mission by providing an environment that is welcoming, stimulating, respectful and supportive.

Vision:

Merrill Memorial Library aspires to be the physical and intellectual anchor of Main Street, providing both space and opportunities to bring our community closer, elevate conversations and support positive change while preserving the small town heart and soul of Yarmouth. We strive to serve our community in both traditional and innovative ways, recognizing that which is common to all of us and unique in each of us, broadening the horizons of all who enter our doors and bringing the best the world has to offer to each and every member of our community.

Core Principles:

Consistent with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Merrill Memorial Library provides a wide variety of books and library resources for patrons of all ages; furnishes materials and information that are diverse and present many viewpoints; challenges censorship; encourages and supports free expression and free access to ideas; is free and accessible to everyone; makes space available for exhibits, meetings and other use-space that is available on an equitable basis for all.



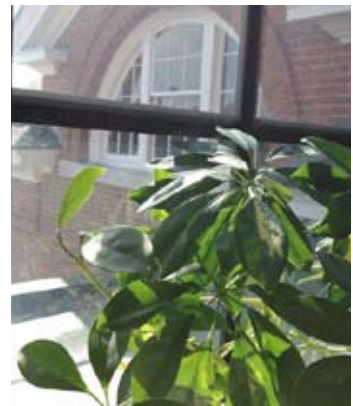
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS:

1. Maintain and expand access to a well-balanced collection of materials and resources.
2. Foster strong relationships with all community members and create opportunities to actively participate in the library.
3. Provide a trusted environment for recreational, intellectual and cultural enrichment for the entire community.
4. Develop improved communications to better disseminate information about the library and encourage feedback from the community.
5. Deliver a high level of customer service and create a welcoming and accessible environment for all.

SELECTED ACTIONABLE OBJECTIVES:

- Join Minerva, a fifty-library consortium with access to over seven million downloadable items.
- Extend library hours.
- Offer expanded programming for adults and children, both independently and in concert with community groups.
- Increase volunteering opportunities.
- Improve library communications, and use email and social media to connect more effectively with the public.
- Develop services for local businesses.
- Assess new technologies and make them available to patrons.

“Since we moved here, the library has been a dependable, welcoming, community-oriented place for us. It’s been essential in helping us feel more integrated in Yarmouth life.”



Yarmouth and its Library:

Yarmouth is a coastal town of approximately eighty-four hundred inhabitants located twelve miles north of Portland. At the heart of the community lies “the village” with its picturesque and quintessentially New England Main Street. It is there that the library stands, the symbolic keystone of the town. The village contains small businesses as well as a good number of residential properties. There is much more to Yarmouth, however, than just the village. There are many other residential neighborhoods, including a number that abut Casco Bay and the Royal River. From a commercial perspective the town’s *Market Analysis & Market Plan Matrix* details “thriving retail and commercial corridors, and a working waterfront.” The town has many residents who have lived in Yarmouth all their lives, and in some cases have connections that go back generations. But there are also many who elected to move here. Many of these are attracted by the excellent schools which are regularly judged to be among the best in the state, but there is also a vibrant group of older residents who chose to come here to retire. The town has a growing cultural and arts community, and one of the highlights of the year is the Clam Festival, held every July. Approximately 120,000 visitors attend this event annually! The Clam Festival with its army of town volunteers is just one example of the civic engagement and pride that is such a key part of Yarmouth’s appeal. The town’s motto “Our Latchstring Always Out” was well chosen, and it speaks eloquently to the friendly, welcoming flavor of life here.

It should also be noted that Yarmouth has a highly educated population, with 60% of adults having earned a bachelor’s (or advanced) degree, a rate that is substantially above the state average. The population is growing and this trend is expected to continue, although there are natural limits to this as the inventory of undeveloped land is finite. That being said, the school populous continues to expand every year, and has gone from 1,392 in 2009 to approximately 1,625 in 2016 (an increase of 17%). Yet despite this trend the population at large (as in the whole state) is getting older, and the *Market Analysis & Market Plan Matrix* reports that “on balance [the number of] younger individuals [is] shrinking as a share of local population while the share of older residents is growing.”

Therefore the overall picture is of a thriving small town with an educated and engaged populous, a town where the library sits at the epicenter of its cultural and intellectual life. While the library welcomes and provides services for ALL the community, there are particular needs amongst the expanding school and pre-school aged population as well as among the growing active and engaged senior cohort. It is within these communities that the greatest needs and opportunities for library services lie.



*“The third floor, what beautiful space!
A wonderful community asset.”*

Library History:

Joseph Edward Merrill was born in Yarmouth in 1832, and he long cherished the dream of building a public library



worthy of the town and its history. In the early years of the twentieth century, land in Brick-Yard Hollow was donated by S.D. Warren and John Coombs, and Mr. Merrill was able to fulfill his ambition and build a library there. The building's architect was A.W. Longfellow, nephew of the famous poet and designer of several of the larger Carnegie library projects as well as a number of

buildings at Harvard University and Radcliffe College. The library was dedicated in 1905 in memory of Mr. Merrill's parents, Ezekiel Merrill and Sarah Hobart Lewis, and Mr. Merrill's personal book collection formed the foundation of the library's initial inventory.

The original footprint of the library was doubled in 1988 when an addition was added to the rear of the building. Throughout the 1990s a landscape plan was implemented, creating gardens and a small park by the new entrance. And in 2014 the library went through a large scale renovation, precipitated by the Yarmouth Historical Society vacating the third floor. This third floor space had become faded over time but has since been returned to its former glory and is now well-used public space. The first and second floors were updated, old electrical, plumbing as well as heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems were modernized, and the building was made A.D.A.—and safety—compliant. A new covered entrance way was added, named “The Gorman Wilson Welcome Area”. In 2016 the library was recognized by Greater Portland Landmarks with their prestigious Preservation Award which “honors outstanding achievement in historic preservation in the greater Portland area.”

The library is supported by the town of Yarmouth, and is a free community service. The library is administered by the Library Director, while a citizen Board of Trustees is responsible for strategic direction and the management and control of the land and building.

For more information about the history, please visit the library website at www.yarmouthlibrary.org.



The Library in 1905, 1945 and now. Inset: Mr. Merrill

© Carol Liscovitz

Strategic Goals, Objectives and Activities

It should be noted that more detailed information regarding the timeline and who is responsible for the implementation of individual goals, objectives and activities is laid out in the Action Plan. That document is available for perusal at the library.

The projected date of completion for each activity is listed in parentheses. “FY2017” would indicate that the activity will be finished by the end of Fiscal Year 2017 (which runs from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.)

Goal 1: Maintain and expand access to a well-balanced collection of materials and resources.

Objective 1: Maintain the current collection of physical and digital materials and resources, and expand it. The downloadable collection should increase by 25% by end of FY2021.

Activity: Maintain and assess the collection, and weed it where appropriate. (Process ongoing)

Activity: Review policies regarding collection development. (Process ongoing)

Activity: Review the current layout of the building, and make any necessary changes. (FY2019)

Activity: Monitor trends around new and changing formats, and ascertain if these meet patrons needs. (FY2017 and every other year going forward)

Activity: Analyze current downloadable circulation. (Every month)

Activity: Steadily increase the collection of downloadable materials, and explore options for digital items. (FY2018 and beyond)

Objective 2: Join Minerva, a fifty-library consortium which provides access to over seven million items.

Activity: Create a cost analysis for the migration of data records to the Minerva system. (FY2017)

Activity: Prepare the collection and data for migration. (FY2018)

Activity: Install and promote the new system, and provide training for the staff and patrons. (FY2019)

Objective 3: Improve signage in the library.

Activity: Create a map and/or directory for patrons. (FY2017)

Activity: Purchase and install internal signage for way-finding and to identify specific areas within the collection. (FY2017)



- Goal 2:** Foster strong relationships with all community members, and create opportunities to actively participate in the library.
- Objective 1:** Maintain the library’s presence in community dialogue, and increase awareness of what is happening at the library by 50%.
 Activity: Attend and participate in community groups and organizations’ regular meetings. (Process ongoing)
 Activity: Keep abreast of community news and events to ensure that the library plays a key role in Yarmouth’s civic life. (Process ongoing)
 Activity: Continue to write articles for local newspaper and provide library updates via a library newsletter. Newsletter should appear at least monthly. (Process ongoing)
- Objective 2:** Contribute to Yarmouth’s economic development growth plan.
 Activity: Investigate the needs of local businesses and citizens who work from home. (FY2017)
 Activity: Provide services to local businesses as deemed necessary by this investigation, with the intent of increasing business services by 30%. (FY2017)
 Activity: Assess the need for a business center in a designated space within the library, and implement if warranted. (FY2017)
- Objective 3:** Complement programs and services provided by educational institutions, both public and private.
 Activity: Continue dialogue with local schools. (Process ongoing)
 Activity: Explore ways to provide year-round resources and support for students, teachers and parents, and implement these ideas. The intent is to increase student, parent and teacher resource use by 30%. (Process ongoing)
- Objective 4:** Expand ways to reach the underserved and those unable to visit the library.
 Activity: Coordinate outreach programs with other community organizations, and increase the frequency of these programs by 25%. (FY2017)
 Activity: Evaluate programs and events to ascertain interest and customer satisfaction. (FY2018)
 Activity: Expand participation in established summer programs and other activities that reach into the community by 10%. (FY2017)
 Activity: Investigate options for mobile libraries (bookmobiles, books on bikes, little free libraries). (FY2020)
- Objective 5:** Create increase in participation by volunteers of all ages by 20%.
 Activity: Develop a variety of ways for people to volunteer. (FY2018)
 Activity: Create job descriptions for volunteer positions. (FY2018)
 Activity: Ensure sustainability by formalizing the volunteering process. (FY2020)
- Objective 6:** Expand joint programming with local and other arts and cultural organizations by 10%.
 Activity: Build relationships with various cultural organizations. (Process ongoing)
 Activity: Explore opportunities for further programming and events. (Process ongoing)
 Activity: Maintain support for the Library Arts Committee and other local arts groups. (Process ongoing)



Goal 3: Provide a trusted environment for recreational, intellectual and cultural enrichment for the entire community.

Objective 1: Connect people of similar interests.

Activity: Encourage community feedback on current programming (events, activities, programs). (FY2018)

Activity: Research library programming in other locales for innovations and ideas. (FY2019)

Activity: Strategically develop programming themes. (FY2019)

Activity: Recruit community experts and volunteers to help with programming. (FY2017)

Activity: Create a program plan for all events and programs. (FY2020)

Activity: Create a process for the execution and evaluation of programs. (FY2018)

Objective 2: Maintain and develop ways to deliver technology services for all. Three new technological initiatives will be instituted by end of FY2021.

Activity: Assess current training and technology classes. (FY2018)

Activity: Monitor technology trends. (Process ongoing)

Activity: Create expanded programs related to current and emerging technologies. (FY2019)

Activity: Create a process for the evaluation and implementation of new technologies. (FY2020)

Objective 3: Increase early-literacy and family programming by 20%.

Activity: Provide a welcoming and exciting environment for early learning by creating an interactive play space. (FY2017)

Activity: Provide staff training for early-literacy best practices. (FY2017 & beyond)

Activity: Collaborate with early childhood providers and schools to offer programs and resources (family night at schools, story hours off-site). (FY2017)

Activity: Increase family participation in programming by developing appropriate events and offering them with greater frequency, including on weekends. (FY2017 & beyond)

Objective 4: Provide opportunities for students to engage with library staff so that the latter can better ascertain what the former wants and needs from the library. Increase student library usage by 30% by end of FY2019.

Activity: Investigate partnership ideas with the schools to promote library programs and resources. (FY2017)

Activity: Develop a plan for outreach visits to the middle and high schools. (FY2017)

Activity: Create opportunities for conversations with, and feedback from, students on how to support their recreational reading, social and informational needs. (FY2018)

Objective 5: Create ways to engage and support the active senior population. Increase programming for seniors by at least one event per month by end of FY2018.

Activity: Provide a welcoming space for seniors to gather regularly. (Process ongoing)

Activity: Collaborate and partner with community organizations to provide services and programming. (FY2017)

Activity: Support ongoing initiatives being developed by Aging in Place and Yarmouth Cares About Neighbors (YCAN). (FY2017)

Activity: Create a process for the execution and evaluation of programs. (FY2018)



Goal 4: Develop improved communications in order to better disseminate information about the library and encourage feedback from the community.

Objective 1: Create a marketing and communications plan.

Activity: Investigate and evaluate other libraries' marketing and branding plans to determine new concepts and best practices. (FY2018)

Activity: Train key staff to develop marketing and promotional skills. (FY2018)

Activity: Widen the distribution of promotional materials. (FY2018)

Activity: Investigate ways to brand the library and create consistent promotional materials. (FY2019)

Activity: Identify relevant constituent groups and the best ways to reach them. (FY2019)

Objective 2: Leverage technology for promotional purposes.

Activity: Assess the website for responsiveness and effectiveness, and explore opportunities for expanding mobile options. (FY2018)

Activity: Seek ways to gather feedback. (FY2019)

Activity: Further develop the email list. (FY2019)

Activity: Expand use of online tools by 10%. (FY2019)

Objective 3: Continue advocacy efforts to garner community-wide support for the library.

Activity: Explore the advisability of developing a Friends Group. (FY2018)

Activity: Continue to provide opportunities for civic engagement. (Process ongoing)

Objective 4: Further define the role of the Board of Trustees.

Activity: Assess the relevance of the Trustees' current role, and update that role accordingly. (FY2018)

Activity: Review and update the Trustees' Bylaws. (FY2018)

Activity: Continue dialogue with the Town Manager regarding the various responsibilities related to library operations and the building. (FY2017)



Goal 5: Deliver a high level of customer service, and create a welcoming and accessible environment for all.

Objective 1: Explore options for expanding library hours.

Activity: Determine the feasibility of expanding library hours, specifically regarding costs and staffing needs. (FY2017)

Activity: Survey patrons to ascertain their preferences for when the library should be open. (FY2018)

Activity: Trial and implement new hours (if deemed appropriate). (FY2018)

Objective 2: Support professional development opportunities for the staff and Board of Trustees.

Activity: Determine the steps needed for the staff to develop the required skills necessary for the implementation of this plan. (FY2017)

Activity: Create a professional development plan. (FY2018)

Activity: Investigate opportunities for Trustee training. (FY2018)

Objective 3: Regularly review the policies of the library.

Activity: Review of current policies by the Library Director and staff. These policies should be updated and new ones created if deemed necessary. (FY2017 and beyond)

Activity: Presentation by the Library Director of updated and new policies to the Trustees for their approval. (FY2018)

Activity: Creation of a new Policy Manual by the Library Director. This will be posted to the library's website. (FY2018)

Objective 4: Develop plans for necessary capital and non-capital improvements to the library.

Activity: Develop short- and long-term C.I.P. maintenance plans. (FY2018)

Activity: Formulate a non-capital items wish list. (FY2018)

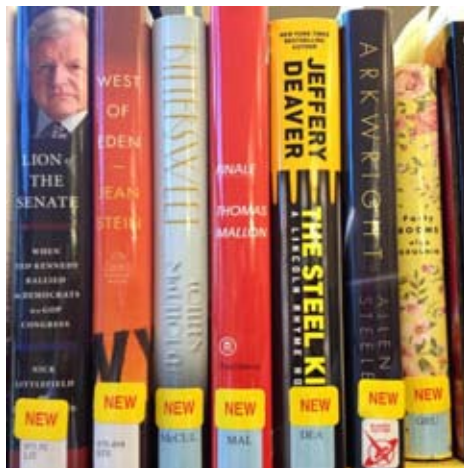
Activity: The Trustees and Library Director advocate for increased C.I.P. balances. (Process ongoing)

Objective 5: Develop a formal timeline and assessment process for this strategic plan's implementation.

Activity: Empower the staff to evaluate and improve the plan. (FY2017)

Activity: Hold regular staff meetings for the ongoing assessment of the plan's implementation. (Annually for next five years)

Activity: The Trustees and Library Director discuss and assess the progress of the plan's implementation throughout the year. The Trustees, as representatives of the community, have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the success of the plan and its implementation by the Library Director and staff. (Process Ongoing)





MERRILL
MEMORIAL
LIBRARY

Survey Results:

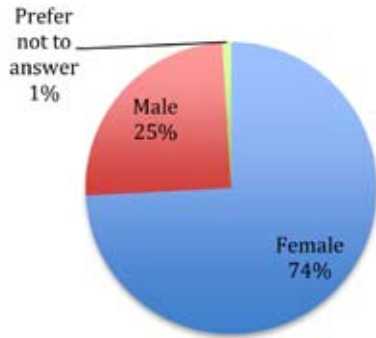


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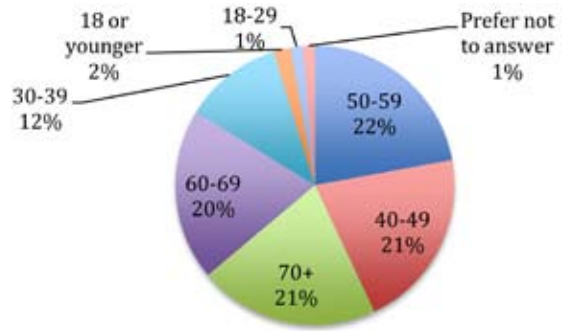
MML Strategic Planning Survey Results

Survey Details: 510 total responses (395 online and 115 paper copies) Based on number of people in the population that were eligible for this survey (6430 out of 8350), at a 95% confidence level and a 5% +/- margin of error, the sample size needed to be greater than 363.

Question 1: Gender



Question 2: Age



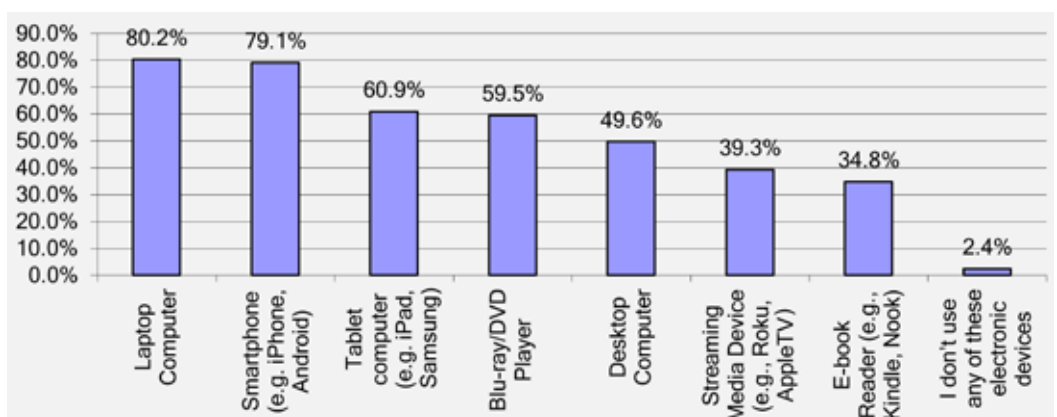
Question 3: How many children are living in your household who are 17 years or younger?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	55.6%	272
One	13.5%	66
Two	21.5%	105
Three	7.2%	35
Four	1.4%	7
More than 4	0.8%	4

Question 4: How long have you lived in Yarmouth?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
20 years or more	40.7%	201
10-19 years	23.1%	114
4-9 years	19.0%	94
1-3 years	8.5%	42
Less than one year	4.7%	23
I do not live in Yarmouth.	4.0%	20

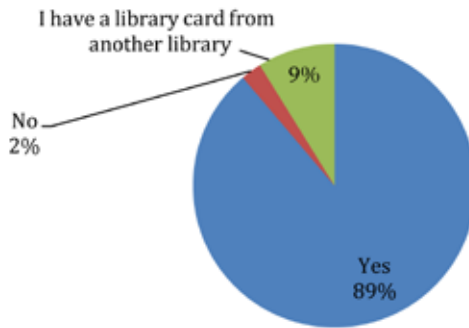
Question 5: Which of the following electronic devices do you use?



Strategic Planning Survey Results *(cont'd)*

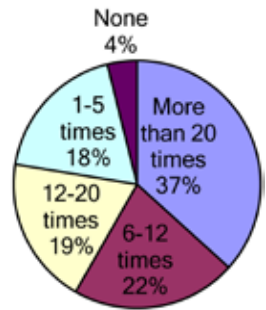
Question 6:

Do you currently have a Merrill Memorial Library Card?



Question 7:

In the last 12 months, how many times did you visit the Merrill Memorial Library?



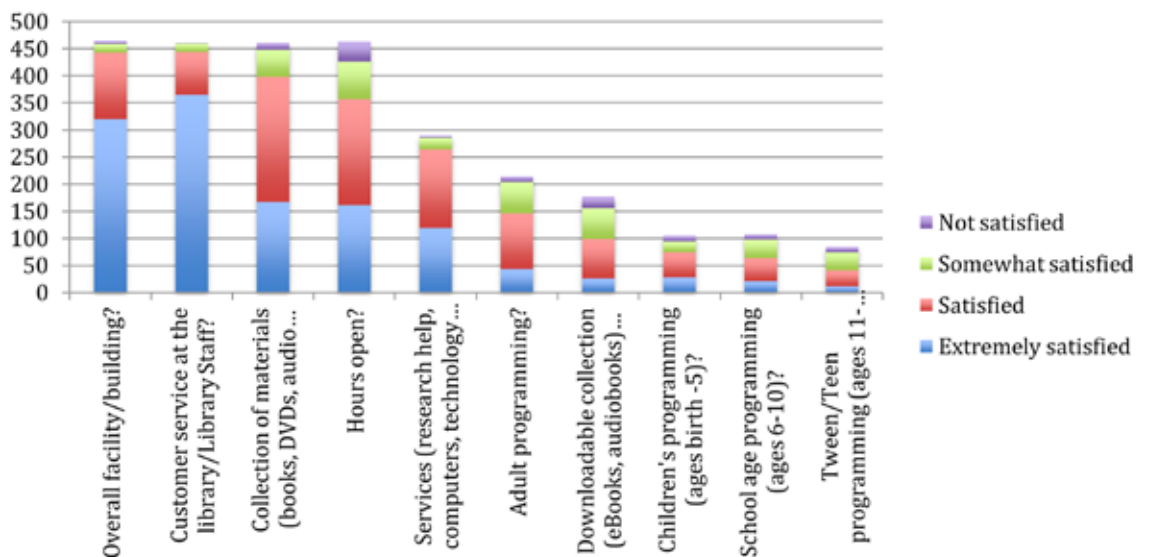
Question 8:

In the 12 months, how did you or your family use the library?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Borrow books or other materials (DVDs, audio books, magazines, etc.)	94.2%	456
Browse the art exhibits	39.7%	192
Visit frequently and the library is part of my regular routine	36.4%	176
Find a place to work, study or read	31.0%	150
Attend an adult program such as a bookclub, knitting club, music performance, or lecture	26.4%	128
Attend a meeting not sponsored by the library (outside organization)	20.7%	100
Use the copier	19.6%	95
Use the library's Wi-Fi	19.4%	94
Use a public computer	11.2%	54
Attend a children's program (ages birth to 5)	8.5%	41
Attend a program for school age children (ages 6-10)	8.3%	40
Asked for research or homework help	7.0%	34
Other (please specify)	6.6%	32
Use the library for social connections	5.6%	27
Attend a program for tweens/teens (ages 11-17)	1.9%	9

Question 9:

How would you rate the library's ...



Strategic Planning Survey Results *(cont'd)*

Question 10: To improve your library experience, what areas should the library focus on? Please choose the three most important to you.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Programs for adults	36.2%	175
Increased hours of operation	31.7%	153
More downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, movies, music and magazines	31.1%	150
Programming collaboration with other town departments, schools and other organizations	21.5%	104
Connecting people with community resources	19.7%	95
Other	17.8%	86
Programs that are multi- or inter-generational	16.1%	78
Website, including online resources	13.5%	65
Programs for tweens/teens (ages 11-17)	12.4%	60
Improved or increased teaching and support for technology	12.0%	58
Programs for school-aged children (ages 6-10)	11.8%	57
Improved or increased technology, WiFi and devices	8.3%	40
More quiet spaces	7.7%	37
Programs for younger children (birth-5)	7.2%	35
Research and homework help	6.8%	33
More collaborative space	6.6%	32
Outreach programs delivered outside the library	3.7%	18

Question 11: The library has put together a Strategic Planning Committee to prioritize what the library should focus on in the next five years in addition to our core services. Please check the three you think the Library should focus on in the future.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Creating, supporting, and facilitating life-long learning programs for all ages.	60.4%	294
Building a strong arts and culture environment in Yarmouth through collaboration with schools, artists, and cultural organizations.	41.7%	203
Improving access to resources and materials by increased collaboration with statewide library systems.	39.2%	191
Providing an inviting, multi-use space for socializing, collaborating, and gathering.	35.7%	174
Expanding and coordinating resources with community organizations, businesses, and other partners to build and foster community engagement and civic discussion.	32.4%	158
Creating outreach services and programs which serve specific segments of the population, such as teens or seniors.	27.5%	134
Providing, teaching, and supporting the use of cutting-edge technology and tools for innovation.	27.1%	132
Other priority	7.8%	38
Providing services and resources to support local businesses.	6.8%	33

Strategic Planning Survey Results *(cont'd)*

Question 12: In your wildest dreams, what would you love to see the library provide? Some examples may be a café, checkout unique items, media lab, Makerspace, etc.



The larger print words are the ones that appear more frequently in the responses to this question.

Question 13: Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

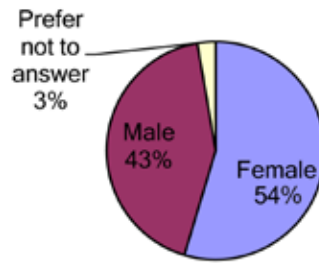


The larger print words are the ones that appear more frequently in the responses to this question.

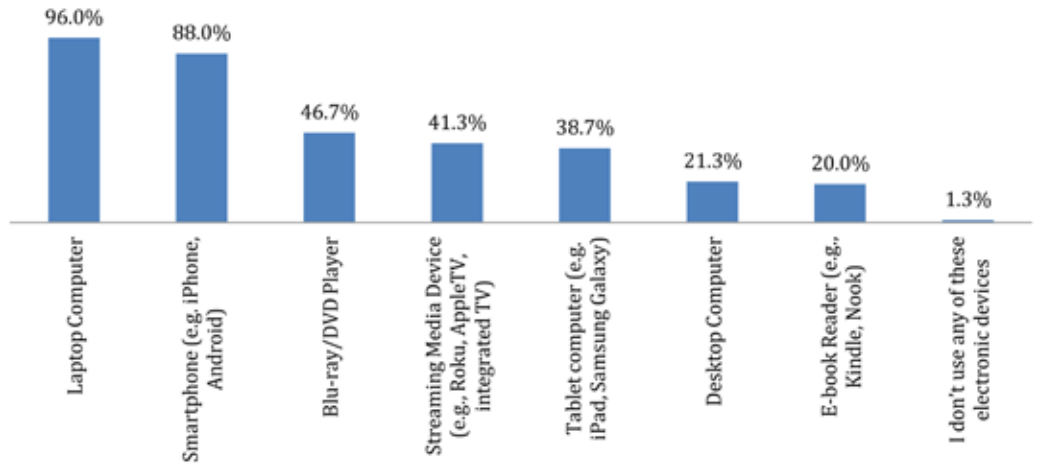
MML Strategic Planning Teen Survey Results

Survey Details: 75 total responses.

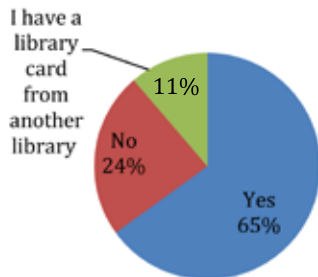
Question 1:
Gender



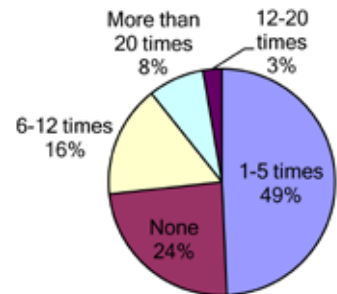
Question 2: Which of the following electronic devices do you use?



Question 3:
Do you currently have a Merrill Memorial Library Card?



Question 4:
In the last 12 months, how many times did you visit the Merrill Memorial Library?

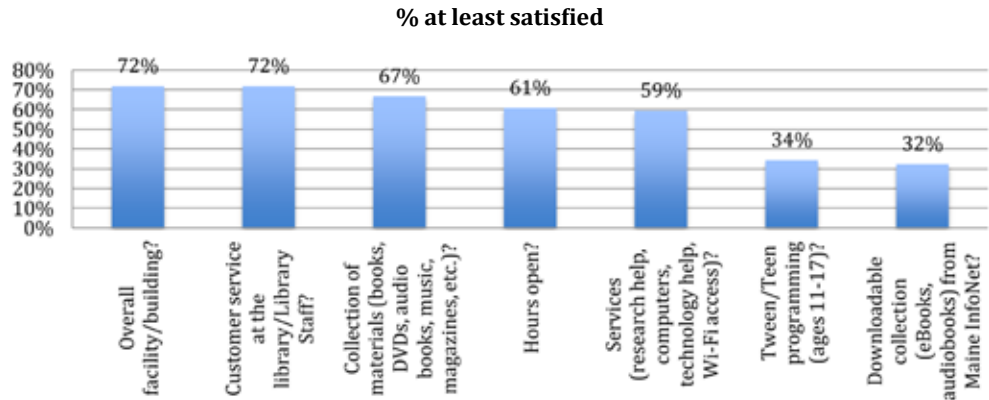


Question 5: What do you do at the Merrill Memorial Library?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Borrow books or other materials (DVDs, audio books, magazines, etc.)	85.1%	57
Find a place to study or read	31.3%	21
Use the library's Wi-Fi	16.4%	11
Other	10.4%	7
Use a public computer	7.5%	5
Use the copier	4.5%	3
Use the website	4.5%	3
Attend a program for tweens/teens (ages 11-17)	3.0%	2
Ask for research or homework help	1.5%	1
Download eBooks	0.0%	0

Strategic Planning Teen Survey Results *(cont'd)*

Question 6: How would you rate the library's...



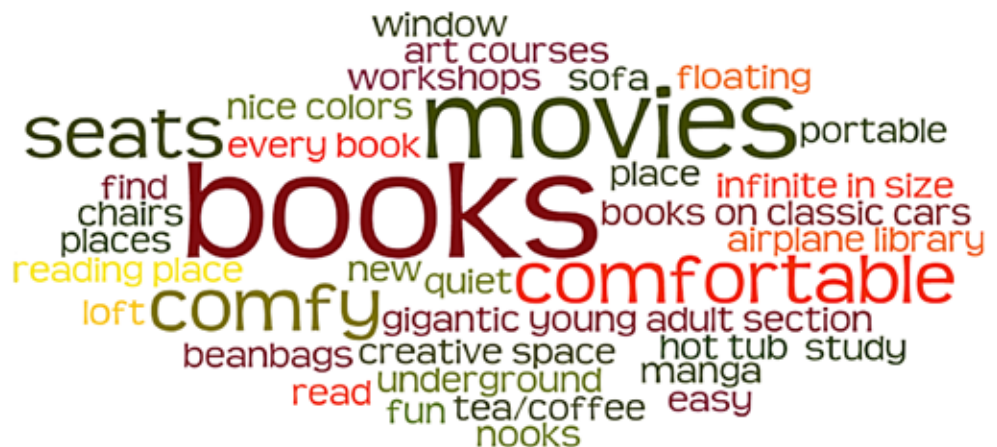
Question 7: What do you like most about the Merrill Memorial Library?

The larger print words are the ones that appear more frequently in the responses to this question.



Question 8: What would be your dream library?

The larger print words are the ones that appear more frequently in the responses to this question.



Strategic Planning Teen Survey Results *(cont'd)*

Question 9: Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

The larger print words are the ones that appear more frequently in the responses to this question.





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“Fling open your doors — consider closing on Fridays — open Saturdays and Sunday (family time days!)”

*"When in doubt, go to the library."**

*~ J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and
the Chamber of Secrets*



Merrill Memorial Library

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yarmouthlibrary.org