



# Phoenicia Library

## **Plan of Service 2016 – 2021**

**June 2016**

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# Introduction

The Library's previous Plan of Service, 2015-2019, adopted 9.18.14, was written at the end of a time of disruption and change for the Phoenicia Library following the devastating fire in 2011, fundraising, and reconstruction. The plan was scheduled for evaluation and revision in depth in 2016 after the library had functioned for a year in its new and expanded space.

The Phoenicia Library reopened in January 2015. In April of that year the Board of Trustees began a process of self-examination and service evaluation to determine how best to direct our resources depending on the needs and wishes of our patrons. With assistance and direction from the Mid-Hudson Library System staff, the Board convened a committee to organize a campaign seeking public input and participation. Focus groups were held in the summer of 2015 and a town wide survey mailed in the fall of 2015. This document details the Phoenicia Library Plan of Service and contains the results of the public input participation. It provides direction for the Board of Trustees and staff for the coming years.

## **Background**

The Phoenicia Library is located in Phoenicia, Town of Shandaken, Ulster County, NY. Shandaken is a rural community of 3085 residents as of the 2010 census. It is known for its natural beauty with glacier-carved streams and rugged forested mountains.

The Phoenicia Public serves users primarily from Shandaken of which Phoenicia is its largest hamlet. It also serves families with more than one home, seasonal or part-time people in rentals and vacation homes, and residents of nearby areas who come for the library's unique programs. The library also hosts the world class Jerry Bartlett Memorial Angling Collection.

## **Demographics**

Seventeen percent of Shandaken residents are 65 and older. Compared with New York State as a whole, Shandaken's age distribution is weighted toward older age and a higher fraction of retirement age (65 or over). Demographic data for Shandaken is similar for Phoenicia, the largest hamlet in the town.

Shandaken has a median income of \$41,121 but an average income of \$63,275 indicating the effect of the relatively few highest incomes weighting the average above the median for 50% of the town. Overall incomes are lower than for the rest of the state, a median of \$41,121

compared with \$58,878 for New York State. For residents 65 or older, the difference is \$14,010 vs. 33,860 for New York State. The US Census Bureau estimates 12.3% of the population lives below the poverty line. Those living below the poverty line are predominantly single parent families with children under 18 and the elderly. Over 50% of families with school-age children qualify for the federal lunch program.

The community has a high percentage of seasonal, 2<sup>nd</sup> homes, or part-time housing units, 16% or over four times greater than for NY State and the country.

### **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges**

Based on the opinions of library patrons through focus groups, surveys, and in-library interactions, impressions of the director, staff, and Board, there is general agreement on the strengths of the Phoenicia Library as of spring, 2016.

**1. Strengths** fall into four groupings of environment, staff, collection, and programs.

Patrons found the building environment to be friendly, comfortable, relaxing, quiet, pleasant, warm, welcoming, homey, beautiful, clean, and bright. They are especially pleased that it is back on Main Street, handicap accessible, and with so much versatile space. Patrons appreciate the energy-efficient design. Overall patrons found it a major improvement over the much-loved old library that burned down in 2011.

The staff and director are described as kind, friendly, and helpful. They are integral to the functioning of all aspects of the library for life-long learning, a safe environment, program development and management, and community building.

After the library lost its collection in the 2011 fire, an up-dated collection was acquired. Patrons like the selection of books, movies/DVDs, magazines, and newspapers including e-books and access to the Mid-Hudson Library System. On-site computers, internet, and cell service are important aspects of the re-vamped library.

Programs hosted in the library are a current innovation, as the old library could not accommodate them due to lack of space. Patrons would like to see the current variety of programs continue.

#### Children's Programs

Based on surveys and focus groups, children's programs are popular especially Story Time, Lego Club, and Toddler Time.

Adult Programs are not age-specific and are give in order of frequency on surveys:

1. *History/Lectures/Discussion/Classes*
2. *Book clubs/reading groups/summer reading*
3. *Arts and crafts classes and workshops*
4. *Cards/games/backgammon*
5. *Movies*
6. *Community meetings* including “Coffee with a Cop”
7. *Music and ukuleles*
8. *Talks and readings by authors*
9. *Everything else*: computer help and stream walk were mentioned specifically. Other program and event mentions were infrequent or could not be grouped.

**2. Weaknesses** In general, most patrons feel the library is doing a great job as it is. If anything, patrons want the library to do more of what it already does: more programs for adults and children, and greater selection of books, DVDs, and ebooks. A few would like to have more open hours though 90% of those surveyed found the current expanded hours adequate. Some things the public would like to see cannot be accomplished due to current resources: receive donated books, use of phone for incoming FAXes, bigger space with more rooms, more parking, designated teen room, and a designated quiet room. (At this time a quiet space may be requested in the Jerry Bartlett Anglers Collection as needed.)

### **3. Opportunities**

Areas of identified opportunities include: instituting more green practices such as composting and reducing waste, setting up more programs using the backyard space, improving community partnerships, developing the Friends of the Library, and participation in the town website and calendar. Efforts to address these areas of opportunity are already underway.

### **4. Challenges**

1. The top challenge is funding the library operations. This requires the community to pass a ballot measure to ensure sufficient funding of living wages for the staff and director.
2. Second biggest challenge is carrying out the programs, events, and resources the public wants with available staffing.

3. Fundraisers beyond the basic operations ballot measure are needed. Cultivating donors and creating fundraisers are difficult without an active Friends of the Library group of volunteers.

4. Communicating library and town news, events, and meetings remains difficult without a local newspaper although the library uses all available means in social media, sidewalk and bulletin board postings, emails and website.

# Plan of Service

## 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.

In April 2016, the Board reviewed the goals of its operations based on the Library’s experience in the last year and information gathered from patrons and stakeholders through the strategic planning process. The Board identified the following three goals consistent with the Phoenicia Library Mission, and specific, measurable steps to meet these goals.

### Goal 1. Create Young Readers: Emergent Literacy

Objectives	Activities
Continue outreach to children	Summer reading program, art hour, story hour
Partner with the schools	Art gallery exhibits, onsite programs, outreach to PTA, monthly flier, open house
Continue off-site programming *	Woodland Playhouse Phoenicia Elementary School
Outreach to diverse populations*	ESL population – identify and contact

\*requires additional resources

### Goal 2. Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning

Objectives	Activities
Digital Literacy – adult learning programs*	Strengthen efforts to improve technology skills and digital communications through classroom workshops and individual help. e-audio, e-books, e-zines
Job Search Support	Help research job listings and apply for jobs Resume writing
Skill Improvements	Writers in Mountains partnership, fishing workshops, ukulele workshops and jams
Information Technology Librarian*	Hire a technology specialist to assist patrons
Provide excellent materials	Keep lending library fresh – weeding collection

	and adding new books based on circulation trends and patron requests.
Target Teens	Math, writing assistance college admission help; magical cards; identify interests to develop programs, such as service projects
Adult Programming*	Continue to offer broad range of programming including education, leisure, cultural topics, readings, local history, arts, movies, music, gardening, local nature, outdoor activities and other interests

**\*requires additional resources**

### **Goal 3. Maintain a Harmonious Environment for the Community: Public and Virtual Space**

Objectives	Activities
Comfortable physical environment	Clean, well lit, uncluttered, well maintained physical space with comfortable seating and tables
Cultural events to bring people together and encourage new interests	Concerts, movies, local history, ukuleles, fishing, art exhibits
Highlight local talent/culture	Design programs led by local residents in their area of interest/expertise
Staffing*	Friendly, skilled people
Outreach communications	Facebook, calendar, bulletin board, web site
Programs designed to foster community communications and civic responsibility	Coffee with a cop, Medicare, health care navigation, voter registration, legal assistance
Offer patrons a choice of relaxing, social and quiet space	Create a quiet zone by request in Angler's Parlor
Partner with local business, town, and civic groups	Provide meeting space; Attend meetings of Phoenicia Business Association, Town Board, and host meeting of local committees and citizen groups.

**\*requires additional resources**



# Implementation of the Plan of Service

## 1. Economic Sustainability

At the heart of delivering the plan of service is insuring the Phoenicia Library has sustainable funding. As recommended by Mid-Hudson Library System, Phoenicia Library will endeavor to cover all its essential functions through the guaranteed funding of the property tax levy. When demand for services exceeds the levy, the Board will return to the voters to decide whether to have additional funding so that there is not a state of deficit or austerity. Should the town reject the request for increased funding, services will be cut back so that they are within our means. Essential functions include, for example: programming costs, annual additions to the collection, personnel costs, building expenses and maintenance, and administrative costs (insurance, accounting, legal). Non-essential functions can be covered by donations such as extra programming and events for the community. The Board will commit to reviewing tax levy funding annually, with a commitment to do a ballot measure campaign (414) at least every third year if funding is no longer adequate.

## 2. Strong & Effective Staff

The staff is the heart of the functioning of the library. Staff must be selected with care, and adequately trained. Ongoing training and staff meetings should occur regularly so that staff is kept up-to-date in best practices. Adequate funding must be in place to be able to provide staff with wages and benefits sufficient to attract and retain staff so there is not constant turn-over or skill deficit.

## 3. Strong & Effective Board

The Board of Trustees provides oversight, determines policy and fundraises. The Board will engage in regular Trustee Training with Mid Hudson Library System for each board member every 3 years to keep up to date on their responsibilities. The Board will monitor anticipated retirements from the Board, and work to recruit good candidates. Board candidates will be vetted through inviting potential Board members to participate on a committee, in volunteer activities, or in the Friends of the Phoenicia Library prior to being invited to join the Board. This is to ensure Board members who are skilled, reliable and work well with others. Prospective Board members will be given the Trustee handbook and realistic understanding of expectations for their commitment.

Consideration should be given to the specific skills someone has to offer that might be useful on the Board (p/r, legal, accounting, communications, fundraising, etc.)

4. Cultivate Long-term Membership in Friends of the Phoenicia Library

The Friends of Phoenicia Library function as an event and fundraising arm of the library. They also offer support as volunteers as needed and during the ballot measure campaigns (414 tax levy) operating expenses campaign. Cultivating a strong, long-term membership of the Friends of the Phoenicia Library is an important goal for the future. Board support by attending meetings and involving Friends in special event planning is a necessary component.

5. Policy

Up to date policy for the library keeps the library functioning fairly, safely and optimally. The Board and director will review the policy every five years, and add or change policies when the need arises.

6. Physical Building

The integrity and aesthetic of the building is important to the experience of the patrons of the library. The director and the building committee will oversee maintenance and repair. The staff will maintain the building interior on a weekly basis.

7. Relationship with Local Officials and the Town of Shandaken

A good relationship with Local Officials and the Town is essential for good library service to residents. The Town Board and the Town Clerk provide information on the needs of residents, as well as offer resources and feedback for the library. The Director will maintain ongoing communication with the Town Supervisor and Town Clerk. The Director will work with the Town to share each institution's outreach publicity and to create collaborations for educational or Town events. The Board will attend Town Board meetings regularly to speak about the library's activities and to keep current on what the issues are in town that the library should be aware of, especially in creating programming.

## 8. Yearly Review

The Plan of Service will be reviewed annually to ensure the library staff and Board are following its guidelines. Each June, the director and Board will evaluate strengths and weaknesses in each of the plan's categories. In July, the results will be presented to the community during the Annual Meeting. If necessary, a revised Service Plan for the following year will be considered and adopted by the Board in September.

# APPENDIX A

## Phoenicia Library

### Focus Group Results

#### Executive Summary

Residents of Shandaken, NY the Phoenicia Library's primary service area, were invited to participate in one of three focus groups conducted in mid-July 2015. Those invited ranged in age from 25 to 85 with equal numbers of men and women. Both users of the library and nonusers were invited although the majority of volunteers were library users. Final group sizes were 8-10 members.

There were three areas of discussion: community and trends, what people like about the library, and suggestions for what the library can do better. Highlight points were:

- 1) All participants expressed great love of the area's natural beauty and close community life. The most important trend noted was the influx of more part-time, 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners, and retirees.
- 2) Appreciation was voiced for the library's new building, its supportive staff, collections including the anglers' parlor, and its growing number of programs. Participants saw the library as a center of community life.
- 3) Suggestions for change fell into two general categories – what the library already does and what it cannot do because of budget and space constraints. Most suggestions are covered in existing library programs. Extended open hours were added shortly after the focus groups were conducted. An area of particular concern was improved outreach to diverse and underserved residents. The library has on-going efforts for outreach under its primary aims of emergent and lifelong literacy though additional funding is required.

Even in the discussion of suggested improvements, participants continued to say, "You are doing a great job."

#### Focus Group Participants

Three focus groups of 8-10 participants each were convened from invited users and nonusers of the Phoenicia Library Association. All three were facilitated using the same procedures. Since all three groups showed very similar participant characteristics, observations, and opinions, results are summarized below by topic area.

The groups taken as a whole contained a mix of males and females aged 30s to 70s, mainly full-time local residents with a few part-time/weekender or seasonal people. Most were library users though equal numbers of nonusers had been invited. Group participants typically worked in the area or owned businesses here. Many were community leaders with experience in local organizations and politics.

### **Community and Trends**

Each focus group began with a general discussion of what participants liked about the area and what trends they saw over time.

#### *What Do You Like about Living Here?*

A sense of community was of central importance. All groups spoke eloquently about how warm, friendly, and supportive the people of the town are. They highly value living in a “quirky”, “loveable”, and “unique” town with a “village atmosphere.” The unpretentious quality of the town is something they cherish and wish to maintain.

The groups spoke of life after Hurricane Irene, noting new and strengthened connections amongst townspeople, agencies, other towns, and the county.

Other positive descriptors cited were: natural beauty, wildlife, outdoor sports and activities, peaceful place to live, tourism and dining, creative and talented residents, cultural events e.g. Festival of the Voice, and social class diversity, safe for kids as everyone looks out for them, a place full of activities for kids, walkable town, accessible via good roads and public transportation.

As one participant put it: It is a protected and naturally spiritual place – “forever wild.” All agreed it is a special place.

#### *Trends Identified*

All groups spent a great deal of time discussing on-going changes in area economics, business, and demographics. Tourism has long been and continues to be a central characteristic of the town. NYC residents flock to Phoenicia as a place to recreate or have a summer/weekend home. They noted there are poor in the area and jobs can be scarce.

Of particular interest were “weekenders,” “retirees,” “seasonal people,” “transplants,” and those with two residences especially split between Phoenicia/Shandaken and NYC. The part-time, weekenders, and seasonal people were typically seen as successful elsewhere yet committed to the Phoenicia area.

There was a perceived increase in these part-time and seasonal people especially coming from Brooklyn. Some of the group participants identified themselves as part-time or weekenders and spoke to their love of the area and need for library access compatible with their schedules.

All agreed there has been a cultural shift here, saying that Phoenicia is the “New Hamptons” or “East Village North” and now “Brooklyn North.” There was clear pride in community along with some worry that the influx may upset the local community balance and raise cost of living. At the same time they welcomed an increase in business including new businesses by those relatively new to the area such as The Graham and The Phoenicia Diner. They noted some tension between those born in the area and still living here, other long-term residents, and newcomers but the majority agreed newcomers enriched the area and that most townspeople were supportive and welcoming to newcomers and new businesses.

Low winter business activity was a concern but no one could say how that has changed over the years as Shandaken is not a known ski/winter sports town. The full-time residents appreciated the winter quiet.

A trend to more Spanish speaking residents was noted. One participant also pointed out there are non-English speakers who are not Hispanic such as Russians and other groups. They felt there is a need to bring the parents and children into the broader educational, social, and safety networks of the town and the library could play a role in doing this.

Social class diversity was noted along with a paucity of ethnic diversity. (This is borne out in census data – 3% Hispanic and 5% all other non-white including African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American and mixed race.)

Technology was discussed as a central issue. Most were in favor of improved, updated, internet, and cellular services with the library as a hub. A minority expressed concern for maintaining the importance of books and non-digital media and forms of communications.

### *What We Like About the Library*

Participants were handed three large sticky notes to jot down what they liked about the library. The points are in the form of “mentions” similar to open-ended survey questions. Once the sticky notes were collected and revealed to the group, discussion took place with general agreement on the importance of all the qualities listed in the order of their mentions.

#### Saturday July 11, 2015 group

1. Computers and internet access
2. Staff - patient and caring, friendly
3. Building/Facility - Community hub or center, gathering, events, networking, “anchor on main street”
4. Programs – range of programs free for adults and kids
5. Collection – books, DVDs, CDs, ebooks and MHLS access, ukes, fishing rods

#### Tuesday July 14, 2015 group

1. Building/Facility – meeting rooms, inviting, comfort, esthetics, central location
2. Staff – cheerful, friendly, competent, hard-working, effort to be community partner
3. Computers and Online Access – ordering, access, resources web accessible
4. Programs – especially kids’ programs
5. Anglers’ collection

Wednesday July 15, 2015 group

1. Building/Facility – central location, lovely environment, heart of the town
2. Staff – wonderful with kids, social-community oriented, warm, friendly
3. Computers and internet access and communication – books online, computers in library, online magazines and books, DVDs, access to MHLS
4. Programs – tutoring, ukers, readings, poetry, kids programs, art, movies, “ground zero for community resources”

*What the library can do better?*

Three sticky notes were also handed out for this question and the responses are summarized by focus group but not in order of frequency of mentions as points did not fall into distinct groups or show strong group consensus. Typically, these were more disjointed discussions once the sticky notes were handed in and read.

Saturday July 11, 2015 group

1. Hours - extended especially for weekenders and working adults
2. Getting word out better, signs, calendars etc – “ambassadors” for library in community
3. Teen services – separate space for teens
4. Outreach to seniors and Spanish-speaking residents
5. More collaboration with schools
6. Make goals of library apparent to community each year, board to be accountable for follow-up
7. Educate patrons on parking
8. Need book sale/book exchange

Tuesday July 14, 2015 group

1. Hours, longer hours for full-time and weekenders – more evening and morning hours, consensus for at least Friday evening.
2. Outreach to poor/illiterate, Spanish-speaking, teens
3. Parking – whole community needs to address parking in town
4. Collection – more books in stacks, separate romance and mysteries from general fiction
5. Use eBooks –(group out of touch with fact library does lend ebooks)
6. Spaces for meetings etc too small
7. Used book sales

### Wednesday July 15 group

1. Raise awareness of library including the fly fishing collection, roles in community especially for ballot measure – mentioned people “a little burnt out” from capital campaign but still need to get voters on board
2. Parking – community-wide issue
3. Expanded role for volunteers – “like Christian did” (no awareness of Friends of Phoenicia Library)
4. Outreach to seniors and Spanish-speaking
5. Install bike racks, open outdoor reading area, special place for teens, add flower box, cell service extender (unaware already installed)
6. More programs –seniors, teens, kids, kids science, adults in the evening, socials, meetings, life skills, author readings, movies, lectures and programs by locals, spiritual or meditation classes/workshops, health, baby-sitting hours, community dances or street events

In general, the members of the focus groups were enthusiastic and pleased with the new library building, staff, collections, and programs. Most said “You are doing great” along with their long list of things they would like. Most understood the library is already doing most of the things on the list and that it is a lot of work. The bottom line seemed to be “Keep up the good work.” The focus group participants would like to see focus group and survey (groups were informed a survey would be done) summary results available to the public along with a summary of what the library already does, its on-going efforts and limitations on these efforts.



## APPENDIX B

### Phoenicia Library

#### Survey of Library Users and Nonusers

##### **Executive Summary**

A survey was designed partly based on local focus groups. The survey was mailed to 2,232 Shandaken residents with available addresses. Surveys were also available online, at the front desk, and through street outreach. By mid-November 2015, 337 surveys from users (81%) and nonusers (19%) of the library were collected and analyzed.

1. Library Collection and Services. Checking out books was by far the most common activity in 90% of those surveyed. All ages checked out books with the highest percentages for those under 56 (95%) compared with those 56 and older (89%). Other items frequently checked out were DVDs (58%), audio/CDs (34%) e-books (20%), ukuleles (10%), and fishing rods (8%). Close to half used computers, 29% made copies (29%), read magazines (20%), read newspapers (20%), and sent faxes (19%). Library patrons also reported using the library to relax (34%) or meet friends (28%). Ninety percent found the library's current extended hours to be adequate for their needs.

2. Programs. Sixty-seven percent of respondents attended programs in the past 6 months. Children's programs were popular as were (in order of mentions) classes/lectures, reading events, arts/crafts, games, movies, community meetings, and music. The programs closely reflect answers to the open-ended survey question on preferred hobbies with the addition of garden and nature programs that topped the hobby list.

3. Like About the Library. There was overall agreement the library is doing a great job. A high percentage said they love the new building, the friendly and helpful staff, the library collection including fishing rods and ukuleles. There was approval for library's evolving role as a community center with free public programs.

4. Suggestions for the Future. The single greatest write-in for this question was to say the library is doing a great job as it is. Other responses were requests to do more of what the library already does: more programs/activities, more children's programs, more and better selection of books, more DVDs, more ebooks, and more community hub activity.

These suggestions will all be taken into consideration with implementation based on the library's staffing and budget.

To best meet the needs of the Phoenicia Library Association patrons, we conducted a multi-pronged “Listen to the Community” study. The approaches included:

1. Informal meetings/interviews with town leaders
2. Focus groups
3. Surveys mailed to all Shandaken residents with known addresses (2232) sent out the fourth week of September, available online, at the library front desk, and through street outreach netting 337 respondents. Surveys came from users and non-users of the library, full-time Shandaken residents as well as part-time and non-residents.

The survey data, including open-ended survey questions, are summarized here.

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

There were 337 completed questionnaires, of which 85 (25%) were done online. The vast majority of questionnaires were filled in completely except for write-in responses that varied by the question. Online surveys had inadvertently omitted the check boxes for male or female; thus, all points regarding sex of respondents are limited to the paper surveys.

Online responses were in general agreement with the responses of paper questionnaires although they were more likely to have internet access at home (95% vs. 83%), to hear about library events online and to use online resources. Both sources attended programs and events to roughly the same degree or slightly greater for online respondents. The latter were 10% more likely to list reading as a hobby but reported less frequent usage of the library (30% vs. 18%). They were more likely to be nonresident with a household size greater than 2, and largely in prime working years, ages 30-55. This profile fits two-household families where one parent may live and work out of the area but attend programs with their families or friends in Shandaken.

The summaries below do not break out the online and paper respondents but give overall results as they are roughly similar in how they view the library and its services.

### **Survey Respondents’ General Characteristics**

Overall, ages of respondents ranged from 8 to over 65 with a median age of 51. The age groups were roughly the same by gender up to age fifty. Due to a higher prevalence of females in age groups over fifty, the sample was 59% female overall. Household sizes were from 1 to 5 or more with 2 the most frequent (43%) and ¼ households of one. Sixty-six percent answering the survey were full-time residents with 22% part-time and the remainder non-resident.

Eighty-six percent of those completing the survey reported internet access at home.

To summarize, survey respondents were primarily local, full-time residents of the Phoenicia Library catchment area. There was good representation in a wide range of ages, fairly evenly split by gender with the exception of those over 59 in which females were more frequent.

### **Non-users and Users of the Library**

Attempts were made to reach non-users of the library through public announcements including social media, posters, flyers, on-the-street outreach and a full mailing to all Shandaken residents with a known postal address.

Eighty-one percent of respondents said they had a library card, similar to the overall 79% coming to the library often (39%) or sometimes (40%). Infrequent and never users completing surveys were 18% and 3% respectively. These latter are likely an undercount of area non-users.

Infrequent or never users reported not living nearby part-time or full-time (41.2%), too busy (18%), used the internet to access materials (8%), or had no need to visit the library (10%).

Those under age 65 reported the most frequent library use with a nearly equal distribution of males and females.

### **Types of Library Services Used**

A checklist that also included open-ended or write-in responses to some items were given in the survey with respondents checking all items that applied. Checking out books was by far the most common activity noted in 90% of those surveyed. All ages checked out books with the highest percentages for those under 56 (95%) compared with those 56 and older (89%). This tally included large print books.

Other items frequently checked out were DVDs (58%), audio/CDs (34%) e-books (20%), ukuleles (10%), and fishing rods (8%).

### **Computer Use**

In spite of an overall 86% prevalence of home internet access, 46% of those surveyed reported using computer-based services at the library. In order of frequency, library patrons used computers for email (32%), online news (19%), social media (15%), work (14%), school (12%), research on health issues (11%), games (10%), research on legal/government issues (9%), other research (9%), and job search (8%).

### **Reading and Other In-Library Services**

Apart from checking out items or using computers at the library, the most common activity was to make copies (29%), read magazines (20%), read newspapers (20%), and send faxes (19%). Library patrons also reported using the library to relax (34%) or meet friends (28%) especially females in the 20-39 year old age group. Access to the children's room with other children and mothers likely fills multiple needs for young women. Job searches were also most common in this group.

## **Programs and Events**

Two-thirds (67%) of those completing the survey said they attended programs, events, and activities in the six months prior to the survey. Program development has been an important part of the library given its expanded physical environment and community center role since completion of the new building.

Programs attended were recorded based on open-ended questions and multiple responses were possible. While 67% said they or family members had attended a program or event in the past six months, this may be an under-count of program/events as a whole. For example, the grand opening of the library was attended by a large number of people but only 4% of survey respondents said they attended the opening. The program “mentions” in the open-ended questions can serve as a relative measure of program popularity within the group completing the survey but not for the larger community over longer periods of time.

### Children’s Programs

For programs and events focused on children (not including teens), the most frequent write-in was a generic mention of “Children’s Programs” followed by Kids’ Room, Story Telling/Story Time, Lego Club, Mr. Bubbles, and Toddler Time.

### Programs for General Public, not age-specific

1. *History/Lectures/Discussion/Classes* as a grouping of programs netted the greatest number of mentions (24% of those answering this question). It will be necessary to examine actual attendance numbers for specific programs/events in this group to for those of greatest interest. The survey data do not permit specific breakdown. Some of these mentions may overlap others written in different terms, for example, “classes” may include art, computers, health information etc. when they are not given specific descriptions.
2. The second most common set of mentions were for *book clubs/reading groups/summer reading* (19%).
3. *Arts and crafts classes and workshops* were commonly mentioned (16%). These programs, regardless of age group, are a strong part of the library program services and are often well attended.
4. *Cards/games/backgammon* as a group ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in program mentions (11%)
5. *Movies* ranked fifth in mentions (10%).
6. *Community meetings* including “Coffee with a Cop” were noted nearly as often as movies (9%).
7. *Music and ukuleles* together ranked 6<sup>th</sup> noted by 8% of respondents to this question. As more music events are set up, these numbers will likely change especially given the library’s packed house for a recent live music event.

8. *Talks and readings by authors* were mentioned by 7% of those filling out this question.

9. *Everything else*: computer help and stream walk were mentioned specifically. Other program and event mentions were infrequent or could not be grouped.

The programs and events listed in this open-ended question are partly a reflection of the programs that were available in the six months prior to the survey and not necessarily an accounting of what patrons would like to see and attend in the future. An open-ended question addresses this point as did the focus groups.

### **Hobbies/Pastimes**

In order to assess the fit of current programs and to develop potential future programs or events, the survey asked respondents to list hobbies and pastimes. This question was a write-in and more than one item could be listed.

Seventy-eight percent of all those surveyed answered this open-ended question (greater than the 66% answering open-ended questions about library programs/events). The most common single response was *reading* (47%), followed by *gardening* (21%).

When grouped, *outdoor sports/activities* (not including gardening) were mentioned by 1/3 of all those answering this question: hiking 14%, nature/outdoors 7%, biking 5%, swimming 5%, fishing 4%, skiing 4%, and golf 1%.

Grouped together *arts* and related mentions were common: art 7%, writing 7%, photography 6%, crafts 4%, painting 4%, playing an instrument 4%. Music was listed by 13% of respondents but it was not clear if it referred to playing music oneself, listening to others, or both.

*Domestic arts* mentions included: cooking 15%, sewing 3%, knitting 4%, and woodworking (as a hobby) 4%.

Exercise not specified as outdoors was listed and included: generic physical exercise/fitness 5.8%, yoga 4%, and dancing 4%.

The remaining mentions were movies 9% (unclear as an art or entertainment or both), socializing 6%, travel 5%, and computers 2%.

In general, the pastimes and hobbies of respondents closely track to the programs and events of the library. Those answering the survey are above all else book readers and that is reflected throughout the survey including in usages of the library services and its programs.

### **Adequacy of Hours**

Phoenicia Library extended its open hours before the survey launch and 90% of the respondents found the hours adequate. Prior to the survey, focus group participants and library patrons had expressed the need for more open hours especially an evening when part-time residents and those with long

commutes could get to the library. Friday hours were extended as a result with the survey confirming the adequacy of this change.

### **Getting the Word Out**

Word of mouth was the number one method of finding out about library events and programs (41%) closely followed by Facebook (38%), bulletin boards at library (37%), Sandwich board at library (36%), flyers (28%), email (26%), library website 14%), and a heterogeneous set of less frequent methods including local papers.

In general, the library is using multiple approaches to notify the public and the public is doing the biggest job itself through word of mouth.

### **What People Like about the Library and What We Can Do Better**

These open-ended questions were at the end of the survey. Eighty-eight percent of those surveyed answered the first question on what they like about the library. The second question on what the library can do better had a far lower response rate of 55% and the final question on what the library can do to serve needs better was answered by only 40%.

This section summarizes overall responses to these three questions. The next section offers a sampling of specific quotes.

#### *What People Like about the Library (88% response)*

Forty-one% of those answering this question found the building environment or atmosphere to their liking. Descriptors in this category included friendly, comfortable, relaxing, quiet, pleasant, warm, welcoming/inviting, homey, social, beautiful, easy access, nice spatial layout, clean, bright.

Thirty-seven percent mentioned the staff as nice, friendly, and helpful.

Library materials were mentioned by 25% of respondents who liked the selection of books, movies/DVDs, computers, magazines, newspapers, and art. Programs were mentioned by 15% who indicated they liked the variety with some specific mentions for children's programs.

Patrons liked the library's role as a community center (13%).

*What the Library Can Do Better (55% response) and What the Library Can Do to Serve Needs Better (40%) responses were combined as respondents took they to be the same point asked two ways.*

The single greatest write-in to this combined question was to say the library is doing a great job as it is (26%) or that there is nothing it needs to do better (13%). Other responses were requests to do more of what the library already does: more programs/activities, more children's programs, more and better selection of books, more DVDs, more ebooks, more space, more community hub activity, more chairs. Some respondents asked for longer hours and more weekend hours, but as pointed out previously in numerical data, 90% were pleased with the current hours.