The Friends of the Petoskey Library work hard in support of library services. The Friends raise thousands of dollars every year which goes directly into library services. The Friends sponsor the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten initiative, which helps promote reading for pre-school children. Each parent or caregiver pledges to read 1,000 books to their child prior to Kindergarten enrollment. The kids receive free books, bags, and other goodies for each milestone reached.

The Friends sort, clean, shelf, and straighten their used book sale, which raises close to $14,000 each year. Approximately $10,000 of that goes directly to the library in support of children’s books and programs.

The Friends helped launch and continue to support the Rhea Murray Awards Collection. These books have won an award within the past three years.

The Friends continue to plan and organize the monthly Friends @ the Carnegie lecture series—giving the public a chance to learn something new and hear different opinions.

Looking for ways to have a positive impact on the whole community led the library into a partnership with the Public Schools of Petoskey to provide assistance in strengthening the reading ability of our youngest readers. Growing Readers Together is a three pronged approach including, one-on-one tutoring, Family Literacy Nights, and Adventure Literacy Packs to take home. As of the writing of this article, 39 first graders have or are receiving tutoring at the public library and 19 families have participated in our Family Literacy Night activities.

~Valerie Meyerson

**Building Upgrades:**

We had a few major building repairs in 2018. The Carnegie received a new roof and the main library had gutter repair work done to alleviate a persistent water problem in the building. We also transitioned to 100% LED lighting to reduce electricity costs, as well as help our environment.

The staff worked hard transitioning our check out system to an RFID tagging system. RFID technology makes for easy self-check outs and an easier inventory process.

**Service Additions:**

Our Library of Things is growing. In addition to Wifi Hotspots, Exploration Kits, Kindles, and Book Club Kits, we have added Ukuleles! Stop by the Reference Desk and check out a Uke to take home. Watch for upcoming classes on how to play too!

**Code Club**

a great way to learn the basics of coding—helps develop the next generation of programmers! The Code Club meets once per week on Mondays, kids can start anytime.
Community Says YES to the Library!

Donors and grantors were very supportive in 2018. We received a grant from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation, the Bay Harbor Foundation, and the Friends of the Petoskey Library to purchase a Smart Board to be utilized in the Teen Area and Classroom.

We also received much community support for our Growing Readers Together program. We received a PHSACF grant to fund our tutors. We also received a donation from The UPS Store to purchase books to give away to our participants. The Petoskey Education Foundation funded books for the Adventure Packs. The Friends of the Petoskey Public Library are funding monies for tutors, supplies for crafts and meals, and volunteers for the meals. We also received support from many area restaurants who provide meals for our Family Literacy Nights: The Grain Train, Julienne Tomatoes, Wine Guys, and Thai Orchid. Many thanks to all for supporting our youngest readers’ quest to become more confident readers!

What’s Next?

We are dubbing 2019 as the year of “no change.” After all the changes we have seen in the past few years, we plan to settle into our new normal and gain our footing. During this year we will be working on planning for our future—including a Strategic Plan, and a Technology Plan. If you are interested in assisting us in planning for the future, we would love your input. Please contact the director for more information on how you can help.

Yes to the Community!

The Numbers say YES!

- We saw a 7% increase in our registered library card users: 7,311!
- Our circulation increased 17% over last year, for a total of 172,263 items borrowed!
- Volunteers provided 2,262 hours of service!

Total Revenues: $1,403,561

- City Operating Taxes
- City Debt Fund Taxes
- Township Taxes
- Federal / State / County
- Local Library Income
- Grants / Donations

Total Expenditures: $1,463,142

- Personnel
- Debt payments
- Materials
- Programming
- Building / Equipment Maintenance
- Capital Outlay / New Equipment
- Supplies & Development
- Utilities & Insurance
- Contracted Services

103,167 visitors in 2018—a 4% increase!

6,388 adults attended 545 programs.

6,756 kids attended 460 programs.

Pre-audited, year-end fund balances:
- General Fund Balance: $578,479
- Building Reserve Fund Balance: $273,000

Current debt on the library: $2,788,306
Building Bonds will be paid off in 2028

Yes to Youth!

The Summer Reading Program for 2018 had an 7% increase in the number of kids signing up for the program and 322 kids reading to level 1. Teen Summer Program participants and finishers increased by 50 kids!

Summer storytime attendance went from 262 in 2017 to 430 in 2018!

We also had the wonderful opportunity to partner with the Great Lakes Chamber Orchestra for the Young Children’s Library Series. There were three fall sessions of the program that highlighted a different part of the orchestra. The program featured stories, music, education, and audience participation. We had a great turnout for Saturday mornings and we’ll complete the series this spring.

The Chess Club, mentored by Robert Bemben, Robin Ray, and Alex Bemben continued for the school year and was featured in a front page Petoskey News Review article in December.

At the Holiday Open House, Ms. Megan and all the children had a fun visit from Elephant and Piggie!

Yes to our Seniors!

Lisa Scholl spends time each week visiting six different senior living facilities, including: Riverview, Pine View, Independence Village, Harbor Watch, Harbor Village, and American House. Lisa brings specially selected books for the residents. She is also able to spend a bit of time with the residents in order for her to pick out books they will love!