

2020 Annual Report to the Community



The year 2020...enough said.

Instead of going over all the events that happened let's just say the year 2020 was a learning year. Everyone had an upset to their lives and we all learned new ways of dealing with life. We mourn for those who have left us over the past year and into the new year, and we care for those who are still with us. The Benedek Memorial Library went through many changes and worked hard to help our communities. When the state wide shut down came we allowed patrons to take many more items than allowed in the last days we could be open. All the items had due dates pushed to a couple of weeks after the library reopened for curbside services. As soon as we could open in-house services we were open and have been lucky enough to keep the library open when others went back to curbside due to circumstances beyond their control. To help with cleaning and sanitizing the return items and items from other libraries we instituted a strict quarantine period and put in a temporary fine free policy. (When we no longer must quarantine we will go back to having fines.) During the shutdown we kept the free wi-fi up and running 24/7 for all who needed an internet connection for doing work and keeping up with school work. When we reopened the public computers were too close to run more than one at a time. To supplement computer use we now have two iPads available to use in the library when the public computer is being used. We received the iPads through a grant from Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, Inc. It was a long and tough year of learning new ways to do things.

Due to the shut down and the reduced number of patrons allowed in the library circulation of physical items went down in 2020, while the circulation of digital materials went up. When we were in shut down the library put an extra \$1000 into our digital collections to help with availability of digital materials. Southern Tier Library System worked with all the libraries to set up a way for patrons to get an electronic card without going into the library. Now the people without library cards can get one online and be able to take out digital items. If they want to use their card in the library, they will need to bring the required IDs for getting a physical card. We have worked to make it easier to use the library over the past year. We are looking into other ways to make using the library easier in 2021.

Funding was difficult to conduct during 2020. We had to cancel most of our fundraisers and turn to a new type of virtual fundraising through the organization FLXGives. We were able to raise over \$2000.00 to help the library. We look forward to using the FLXGives again in November 2021.

Programming changed the greatest in 2020. We went from in-house programming to virtual programming, or outside programming. During and after the shutdown ended the Library turned Story Time, and Crafting events to videos. We kept the Summer Reading Plus (SRP) running with “Take and Make” packets, and



virtual programming. The SRP was funded from a grant through the Jenny Foster Fund from the Village of Savona. In July and August, we did Bingo games, and had the ending program as an ice cream social outside with Nature’s Way doing a live animal show. During the summer and into the fall the Library placed story walks along the sidewalk of the Library property. After the SRP, we continued to put videos up on our website and Facebook page on crafting and to showcase the items we have at the Library which are available for all to use.

What is going to happen in 2021? It is all going to depend on how the community works to keep the Covid-19 numbers down. We all hope that the pandemic will end soon, but only time will tell. Until it does end the library will be available with wi-fi connection 24/7. We will continue to do virtual programming with Zoom Story Times, and other new types of virtual programming. When the weather gets better we will do programming outside, weather permitting. We are looking into doing Story Time outside, maybe some music or other types of programming. The Summer Reading Plus is being planned now. Keep an eye on our website or Facebook page for further information on upcoming programs. Our lights are on and we will do everything we can to keep the Library open and available for all to enjoy. Thank you for your support of the Dr. Sandor and Berthe Benedek Memorial Library. Please stay safe and healthy.