The E.C. Scranton Memorial Library

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The Library

The library operates on winter and summer hours. During the winter hours, the library is open from nine until nine Monday through Thursday, nine until five-thirty on Friday, nine to five on Saturday and one to four on Sundays. Summer hours run from nine to nine Monday through Thursday, nine to five-thirty on Friday, nine to noon on Saturdays and the library is closed on Sundays. In addition to the reduced hours during the summer, the library also takes off many of the usual holidays (New Years, Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc), but the library keeps the staff open as long as possible. (E.C. Scranton Memorial Library | Madison, CT). The library is broken down into three main departments: Children's, Technology/Circulation and Adult Services. The Board of Trustees for the E.C. Scranton Library oversees library director Beth Crowley, who (with the help of assistant direct Marcia Sokolnicki) works with the department heads. The department heads each have collection of both full-time and part-time employees to distribute the work amongst. The staff can talk to their department heads, but each of the department heads directly report back to director Crowley (Crowley, personal communication, June 27, 2014).

The E.C. Scranton Library is composed of a single branch (though it has access to the surrounding libraries through the LION catalog and delivery system as well as some access to a statewide catalog). The library is made up of two parts. The first is the original library, which is used as a library for the town beginning in 1901. This building is classically designed, brick walls, a large Roman arch, and other elements that fit the classical architectural style.

Later in the 1960s when the building had become too small to house all of the books that the library had been collecting, the library expanded with a two-story addition and renovated the original library building. In 1989, the library expanded a second time. This addition and further expansion is done in a more modern style, sleeker with more windows and better wiring for the expanding technology market (E.C. Scranton Memorial Library | Madison, CT). All totaled, the library has an impressive thirty thousand square feet for the libraries use. Further plans proposed in September of 2013 hope to expand the libraries usable space, while also protecting local historical landmarks (Madison Planning and Zoning Commission Planning Meeting Minutes). The library also has a collection of solar panels on the roof to offset the rising cost of energy. This particularly green item makes E.C. Scranton a unique piece on the Main Street of Madison. The library also has an outdoor book drop, located to give patrons an easy and quick way to deposit materials that they do not want to risk late charges on.

E.C. Scranton Library has a few ways that it helps to the community. The library has an annual book sale to raise money for the library to us, which means that the taxpayers have less to pay to the library. However, one very unusual practice the library has is that they have a collection of buildings they rent out to commercial and residential tenants. The library bought the buildings with the intention of building an expansion. The library is still planning an expansion, but is renting the buildings to raise money in the interim. This provides a unique source of income, but also gives the community the opportunity for affordable housing (Crowley, personal communication, June 27, 2014).

The library's placement poses some problems for users. The first major problem encountered is the lack of parking space available for patrons. The library is situated on

the Main Street of Madison. The E.C. Scranton Memorial Library is situated in a very

popular part of town. Shopping, restaurants and a small movie theatre make parking in

the town center slightly more of a challenge than if the library had it's own parking area

for use by it's patrons. Parking is essentially limited to a stretch of parallel parking

spaces running up and down or a small lot located across the street and behind a stretch

of shops. Obviously, parking is an issue, but if the library's proposal for expansion is

approved (Madison Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes) the library will have a

new area to dedicate to patron parking.

Programs:

Programming is an important part of librarianship. The modern library is more

than a repository for physical volumes. The library also needs to be a place for

enrichment for people of all ages. Many times, libraries will hold programs and offer the

public the use of their community rooms. The E.C. Scranton Library is no exception,

providing an atmosphere conducive to community building. The programs vary

depending on age group, but it is important to involve the social aspect of the library into

every department. Looking at the community calendar on the library's main website

(Events | E.C. Scranton Memorial Library), there are a variety of programs available with

a few trends that can be seen for each department.

Children's Programs:

Children's programming at the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library is mostly

centered on socialization. These programs are a place where parents can bring their

preschoolers and infants to meet and socialize with others, but also a fun way for parents

to interact with one another. The year round programming includes story times, toddler

time and a "Twin Time" program for families with multiple children. These various programs are usually focused on family and what raising children in addition to getting children socialized when they are younger. It also provides new parents connections with more experienced parents, who may be able to provide advice or simply offer their experience to new parents. The programs for very young children serve as both a social atmosphere for young children to meet, but also provides parents the opportunity to get resources and development.

For slightly older children, there is a science program, a regular chess club and "Let's Explore Cultures" program that expose younger members of the library to different cultures through presentations by representatives from the high school level. These programs are meant for young learners entering into the world of academics.

Teen Programs:

The E.C. Scranton Library is essential to its young adult patrons in a variety of ways. Whether it's a place for researching the next big paper, a place to hang out and relax with friends or a place to find a good book to read, Scranton Library offers these uses and more to their young and eager patrons.

The library offers a variety of themed programs for their teen patrons, in an attempt to bring more of the current pop culture into the library. The library has embraced the Harry Potter Fandom and has opened time for students of the experimental website "Hogwarts is Here" for students to come and participate in 'classes' that are taught at an online variation of Hogwarts. The library also had a party for teens to celebrate the release of the new move *The Fault in Our Stars* to connect teens with the novel that started the cultural phenomenon. Other activities include movie nights for

teens, giving young adults a safe and controlled environment to socialize in. There is

also a craft club, a creative writing group and a Teen Advisory Group. The TAG group

has a direct effect on the Teen Library's inner workings by giving students the

opportunity to give the opinions on programming to the teen library, which then takes

that input and puts it toward developing programs (Teen Advisory Group | E.C. Scranton

Memorial Library). These group activities provided by the library give teenagers the

social space they may not have offered to them at school or home. It gives teens a sense

of creativity and connectedness that they need in order to go through high school and

beyond.

The library offers more practical activities, such as practice sessions for popular

standardized tests in college prep courses. The library also offers help with making these

decisions by providing many resources for their young academics. (Events | E.C Scranton

Memorial Library)

The resources that the library offers for young people is also in the databases and

technology that students need to complete their schoolwork. The library has a number of

computers that teen patrons can use to do their homework, fill out college applications or

research for projects. The databases that these students need use are not always available

to schools for a reasonable price, so the library offers students a place to go and use this

data.

Adult Programs:

Adult programming is always difficult. It's a matter of finding something that the

community is interested in and finding a way to give it substance in the physical library.

Sometimes, this is done in the form of presenters and workshops done by professionals, while other times the library staff is in charge of leading the discussion or interest group.

The E.C. Scranton Memorial Library has a variety of programs specifically for adults. These are often more unique presenters than the specialized groups noted in the Children and Teen areas of the library. However, the library does offer adult fiction and nonfiction book clubs, special technical drop-in and registration classes as well as writing groups in poetry and fiction.

The adult programs offered at the E.C. Scranton Memorial library are varied and frequent. The special presentations range from programs about Fire Safety to programs about Feng Shui. The E. C. Scranton Memorial Library has to offer a variety of programs to their patrons to keep them invested in the library and keep them coming back. The library takes input from other libraries and uses the knowledge that they gain from it decides which programs they would like in the future.

Technology programs are especially popular in libraries, but it's hard to find presenters who can answer every question that the public has about the technology they're presented with. When a program does particularly well, it is more enticing to have the presenter come back again. Or if there is an interest shown in patrons who want to learn how to use iPads (for example), the library will either seek out and find a presenter or have a member of the staff hold a class to present the information that patrons want to learn. One particularly useful program is the "Tech Help for Seniors," where members of the community can bring their devices in to teenagers who grew up with and understand the technology. Programs like these bridge the gap between teens

and seniors and help strengthen the community (Events | E.C. Scranton memorial Library).

Special Services Offered:

Through the inter-library loan, the E.C. Scranton Library has access to the full foreign language collection of other libraries, but has a variety of materials in other languages. In addition to a variety of unique programs, there are also special services that are designed for different age groups.

Children:

Some of the children's services that the Scranton Memorial Library offers include programs for age groups within the children grouping. One such program the children's department offers is what they call 'reading buddies' in an attempt to further increase young reader numbers. The reading buddies program is not just for children of the same age to read together, but encourages teens to interact with the younger children and serve as mentors to encourage the younger children to use the library to the best of their advantage (Kids | E.C. Scranton Memorial Library).

When looking at materials for a children's section, different things need to be considered between the two different age groups, very young children and older children. For young children (infants and preschool) the focus is on enrichment and teaching basic ideas (like colors, numbers, etc). Books for slightly older kids focus more on reading development (easy reading levels and beginner chapter books) and nonfiction for school projects. Children's librarians know what the schools need their library to have for children's projects, but also have access to a wide catalog of options through out the state.

Children use technology, so the library has to provide them with the computer terminals to understand how to use the programs. At a young age, the focus is more on how to use and understand a technology, so that children understand it better when they get to middle school where they will be required to use the skills they learn with computers for other projects.

Teens:

The library also offers programs to specifically interest teens in middle school and high school. The Scranton library offers a variety of special programs, including a teen reading club, a teen advisory group and college prep help for those teens crossing over into the daunting world of college applications and standardized testing. The library also offers a unique space for teens to hang out and work on homework after school. The programs are specifically geared toward teen interest, such as books in the young adult genre or high school social groups in a safe environment.

The materials that the teen section offers are mostly for entertainment, since teens are more comfortable accessing information online than in a reference book. However, there are materials that are specifically geared toward nonfiction for teens. The library has to provide these options so that teens have another outlet, though teens can access the adult section as well. The resources available to teens are focused more on college and research they might require for projects at a high school level.

Adults:

Libraries have to offer adults programs of interest, such as author talks and book clubs. The Madison library has had to add more variety to their programming. Technology programs are becoming increasingly common, not only introducing new

technologies, but also showing patrons how to use services that the library offers. The "Tech Help for Seniors" program at the library. The library provides community service opportunities for younger people in the teen age group to help the adults in the library learn to understand their new technology.

The Scranton Memorial library recently gave a demonstration for how to navigate their large collection of databases. These databases include a variety of resources, such as Consumer Reports to help patrons find the best value of products, Zinio to provide patrons with digital magazines for their electronic readers and Mango languages to provide people the opportunity to learn a language on free software to Madison patrons. Other databases include OverDrive, which gives patrons access to the digital collection of all the surrounding libraries, and the Gale Group databases, giving patrons access to legal forms, education resources and the Chilton auto repair manual library. Another program that the library provides access from their computers in the library is the Ancestry.com website, allowing patrons to search genealogy records for evidence of their relatives (Research | E.C. Scranton Memorial Library).

One very important service that libraries offer is opportunities to find jobs. Sometimes these can volunteer opportunities within the library or by providing job resources for job hunters. With the current economy, it is good to have a place where people can go and hunt for their first jobs or work on their resume for a new job. The library can offer specific service databases to help with resume and interview techniques. The library can also provide Internet services that allow patrons to search for a variety of jobs, send emails or fill out online applications. Databases like JobNow offer resume

help and interview pointers. This database is available through the efforts of individuals at the library.

Like many libraries, the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library offers services to elder patrons. Physical materials, such as Large Print or Audio Books give elder patrons the option to still remain active readers and continuing to entertain themselves with print materials that they can read or audio materials we can listen to. It is also important to be able to offer seniors the resources they are used to using. Some libraries don't seen a need for physical books anymore, since "everything" is available online. Seniors however, still prefer options like the phonebook or the dictionary to answer their questions.

Another important service that the Madison library offers is technology assistance for seniors living in the digital age who simply want to better understand their new technologies. Library staff is more commonly increasing their technological knowledge and passing that knowledge onto the general public. The library also provides programming for seniors that are of interest to them, such as historical programs. Seniors struggle with technology, so it is important for librarians at the Scranton library to provide assistance in understanding how to use technology for themselves. Print materials do not always carry the most up to date information, so it is important that the Madison library provides instruction for older patrons to understand technology. The Internet can be a very confusing place for those who did not grow up with it as a frequently used resource. The seniors in the community can often get overwhelmed, so it's important to have knowledgeable librarians who can guide them through the technology.

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