



Bill Library
718 Colonel Ledyard Hwy
Ledyard, CT 06339
860-464-9912



July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

www.ledyardlibrary.org



Gales Ferry Library
18 Hurlbutt Road
Gales Ferry, CT 06335
860-464-6943

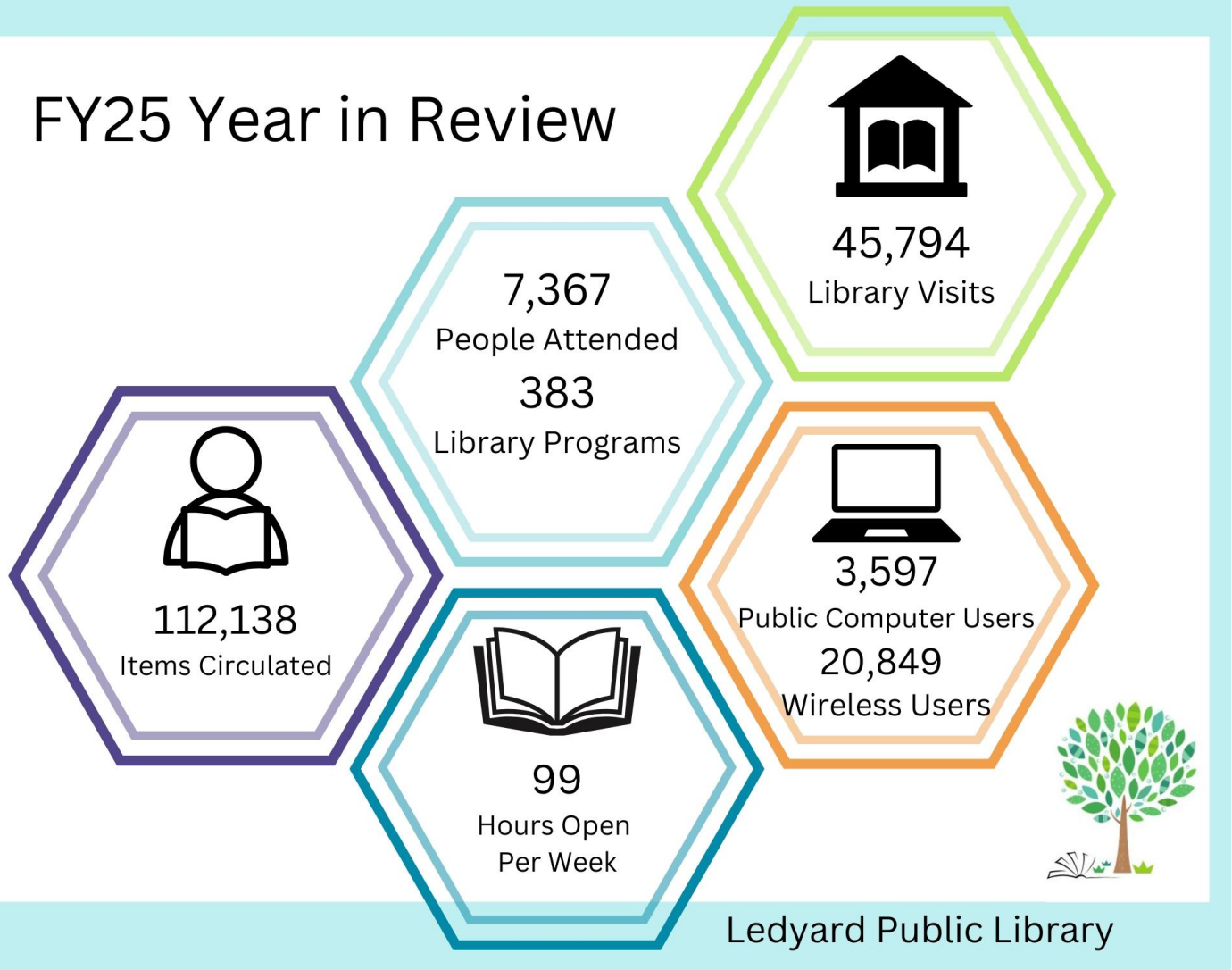
As champions of lifelong learning, libraries are a place to access technology, indulge curiosities, and explore new ideas, hobbies, and careers. At the Ledyard Public Library, our focus is centered around carrying out our mission, achieving our strategic plan goals, and continuing to make the library a welcoming and accessible place for all. We are beyond grateful for our patrons who enjoy library services that are made possible through funding from taxpayer dollars, support groups, and individual donors. All of these generous contributions enrich library services and change lives.

Mission: Ledyard Public Library provides valuable resources, friendly, knowledgeable service, and free access to a diversity of ideas, information, and experiences. We strive to enhance the quality of life in our community and encourage the love of reading, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.

I am very proud to share that Ledyard Public Library was selected to receive a national grant for the second year in a row to help us make our community an even greater place for everyone. Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC): Accessible Small and Rural Communities is an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that provides community engagement and accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities. With this grant, we have improved how members of our community access these important library services. This LTC grant funding allowed us to install a new circulation desk at Bill Library, making us ADA-compliant.

With the constant evolution of library trends, services, and collections, our dedicated staff deserve kudos for their commitment to providing excellent library services to our community. We have a great group of approachable, hardworking people ready to help our patrons with their library needs. Library staff are always willing to assist, whether it be lending an extra hand at a program, creating an eye-catching display to highlight our collections, or providing important feedback about a new service. Our team adapts to meet new circumstances, which is evident by all the new collections and workflow changes made over the last few years.

FY25 Year in Review



Ledyard Public Library

Statistics Summarized (compared to Fiscal Year 2024)

- Overall circulation of materials increased over 5.5%
- Programming offerings increased 5% and more than 2,000 additional people attended programs
- Library visitations increased by more than 10%
- Service hours open per week remained consistent
- Public computer users stayed comparable, while WiFi users slightly decreased

Youth Services – written by Stacey Burt

Fiscal Year 24 – 25 was a great year for Youth Services at Ledyard Public Library! We offered more programs than ever before, and our attendance continues to grow by leaps and bounds. We hosted 249 in-person programs for children and teens and had 6,715 attendees. In addition to this, we offer a variety of self-directed programs and activities that are very popular with the community. Our Summer Adventure Program is categorized as a self-directed program, as are the very popular scavenger hunts, take-and-make crafts, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program, and the celebrating community crafts that we put out periodically. In total, for self-directed activities, we had 8,701 participants! We are more than pleased by the response from the community. Our goal continues to be to provide programs that are entertaining and relevant to the community's needs.

This was the year that our Toy Library and Board Game Collection began circulating, and the community feedback has been fantastic! We circulated 915 juvenile toys and 95 young adult toys. Our board game collection started a few months later, and we have circulated 123 juvenile board games and 66 young adult board games. We are so grateful to bring these new circulating collections to our community as we realize the importance of play during the early years of childhood development. These new collections have attracted families, children, and teens to the library, but they have also helped ease the economic burden by offering equitable resources. We believe in the importance of building early literacy skills such as talking, reading, singing, playing, and writing every day. Children experience the world through play while also developing fine motor skills, cognitive concepts, language, and social

skills. Teens use play to interact and socialize with their peers, thus strengthening their mental and physical health. These new collections have enriched the library experience for children, teens, families, and our community as a whole. The Toy Library collection was created in collaboration with Traveling Toys, Inc., with generous funding from the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. Some of the boards were also purchased with Toy Library funds, but we also had many donations from our patrons and board game companies that we contacted to request donations. I am happy to say we once again applied for and received grants from our community in FY 2025 in the hopes of adding a new collection of Yoto Audio Players and Cards. We will be unveiling this new collection in FY 2026!

Finally, and most importantly, we continue to focus on creating a collection of books and materials that are popular but also provide depth and a diversity of viewpoints. Inherent in the collection development philosophy for our children and teen collections is the belief that everyone should be represented in the collection. We do not place value on one patron's needs or preferences over another's. We hope to broaden the vision of our children and teens, while also supporting their recreational reading and encouraging and facilitating their reading skills. I am very happy to report that juvenile materials made up 59% of the total library circulation for fiscal year 2025. And our young adult collection made up 3% of the total library circulation. We are very proud of our juvenile and teen book collections and are pleased that the community is supporting our efforts.

Adult Services – written by Matt Novosad and Lyndsey Robinson

FY2025 saw many exciting and popular programs offered at Bill. In September, we hosted Matt Reardon to speak on his book *The Traitor's Homecoming* as part of the collaborative Connecticut Authors Trail. In November, we once again welcomed John Preston and Bob Walsh, who taught a six-week beginner fly tying course and a six-week advanced course. Throughout the rest of the fiscal year, we hosted a variety of speakers, such as resident and columnist Steve Fagin, who spoke about hiking. In addition, we have had many successful programs at Gales Ferry over the past year. The Senior Book Discussion group has continued at the Ledyard Senior Center. Several new members have joined, and the discussion is as lively as the participants. Another new book group, Ledyard Public Library Book Chat, has also started. Every month, participants read a book of their choice based on a given topic and discuss them all. Everyone always leaves with a smile and a large list of books to read. Crafting programs remain popular, with options such as crocheting, miniature book binding, making custom bath salts, and more. Drop-In Genealogy and Cookbook Club continue to be successful and popular during the fiscal year.

The Ledyard Public Library also offered a new app called Transparent Language. This language learning app replaced the previous app Mango, and has over 100 different languages to offer, including American Sign Language. Users can sign up for it with their library card for free using the link on the website. Our e-reading services are also still going strong, with Hoopla, Libby, and Palace Project all available for Ledyard patrons to use to get e-books, digital audiobooks, and more.

During FY25, Bill Library saw the addition of a brand-new circulation desk funded by the ALA's *Libraries Transforming Communities* grant. This new desk has allowed workflow at the circulation desk to be improved so that we can provide even better service for our patrons. Most notable was the addition of a book return slot, as it had been noted that patrons often stood in line just to return materials. Additionally, the Reference desk now has space and seating for patrons, so reference services and technology help can be more easily conducted at the reference desk itself rather than on the Library floor.

Library Commission

The Ledyard Public Library is advised by the Ledyard Library Commission, which typically meets on the third Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at alternating library locations. The public is welcome at all meetings. The Commission agendas and minutes are posted on the Town's webpage at www.ledyardct.org under "Agendas and Minutes."

Library Commissioners focused their efforts this year on creating a new Consortium Working Group to evaluate our membership with the LION Consortium. In February, the Library Commission put on a "Love Your Library" fundraising event. Commissioners also participated in Library Giving Day again this year, raising \$1,175 from 12 different donors.

Members of the Commission are:

John Bolduc, Chair

Rolf Racich, Vice Chair

Ellin Grenger, Secretary

Ralph Hightower, Treasurer

Elizabeth Rumery

Peter Diette

Cynthia Wright

Wendy Hellekson

Gillian Thorne

The Friends of the Ledyard Library continue to support library services through all their fundraising efforts. A few of the big fundraising events for the Friends include the annual Bill Library Book Sale, the Snowflake Festival, and a speed puzzling event. Their efforts allow them to fund programs for all ages, purchase museum discount passes available for

checkout, and help sustain online library resources such as the very popular Hoopla. We are very grateful for the Friends volunteers and appreciate all they do to provide additional support for our Library.

The Bill Library Association, Inc. presented a scholarship this past year to a graduating senior from Ledyard Public High School. Trustees continue to keep with tradition and gather in October for a potluck-style dinner followed by the annual meeting.

Volunteers

Volunteer support totaled 836 hours, which averaged out to 16 hours per week! Our volunteers assisted with the Seed Library, fundraising efforts, rain garden maintenance, and the ongoing book sale at both library buildings. We appreciate all our volunteers' hard work and commitment to the library throughout the year.

Grants/Bequests

American Library Association – Libraries Transforming Communities (Round 2)
Avery Family Memorial Fund
Book Voyagers through CT Humanities
Eastern Connecticut Community Foundation
Eastern CT Community Gardens Association (ECCGA)
Joan D. Hauptfeld Fund
Ledyard Rotary Foundation
Traveling Toys, Inc.

Gifts from community members in support of our mission or grants requested for specific programs support the collection, honor an occasion, or remember a loved one who has passed away. We also collaborated with Ledyard Social Services to collect donations, allowing us to distribute new books to local children and teens for the holiday season. Nearly 100 books were distributed to our local families in need, which aligns with our goal to make sure books are present in households. Studies show that when books are in homes, children are more likely to succeed in school and beyond.

Gifts Donated by groups

Glenwood's Book Club
Ledyard Garden Club
Ledyard Lions Club
United Methodist Church of Gales Ferry

Gifts In Memory of

Janet Barnett
Janet Hartzell
Thomas Lees
Rebecca Nash
Evelyn "Lynn" Tarozzi

Gifts Donated by Individuals

Marie T. Daumy
Jody and Bryan Fagan
Ellin Grenger
Doug Moffett
Elaine C. Porter
Harry and Marie Tobiassen

Library Hours

Bill Library

Monday – Wednesday	9-8
Thursday	Closed
Friday – Saturday	9-5
Sunday (seasonal)	1-5

Gales Ferry Library

Monday – Tuesday	9-8
Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday	9-5
Friday & Sunday	Closed

Library Staff

Jessica Franco, Director
Matt Novosad, Assistant Librarian II – Adult Services
Lyndsey Robinson, Assistant Librarian I – Adult Services
Stacey Burt, Assistant Librarian I – Youth Services
Raven Rose, Library Technician I – Youth Services
Erica Christofferson, Administrative Assistant & Head of Technical Services
Jackie Bacon, Library Technician I – Reference
Cathy Davis, Library Technician I – Reference
Laura Norcia, Library Associate
Lorraine Healy, Library Associate
Beth Nemchek, Library Associate
Paul Brennan, Library Associate
DeeDee ODonnell, Library Associate
Amanda Marcelynas, Library Associate
Kim Pendleton, Custodian



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