

Director's Monthly Report

March 2025



March was a busy month, for March—not like a summer month, but busy for March. While we had fewer people in the library than last year, primarily due to few programs than last year. Sundays are popular, nearly as busy as Saturdays. Wednesday evenings continue to be the slowest times, unless we have an evening program. (Thursday evening likely would be similar, though we always have a program on Thursday nights.) In March we launched our countywide community read of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, which runs through May. The spring program calendar is very full as a result. March was also dominated by building issues (roof, pavilion, and generator), and, since the executive order of March 14 cutting the IMLS, with advocacy at both the state and federal levels. In March, both the Hillsdale and Ancram town boards passed resolutions in support of the library and of state and federal funding for libraries. Copake and the town board of supervisors did so in early April. Taghkanic is proposing a similar resolution at its board meeting on April 14. We have spoken with reporters at a number of local media and a number of articles have been published on the issue and its local implications. Some grant funding has already been compromised. We will need to keep tabs on developments over the next several months and on the impact on our income.

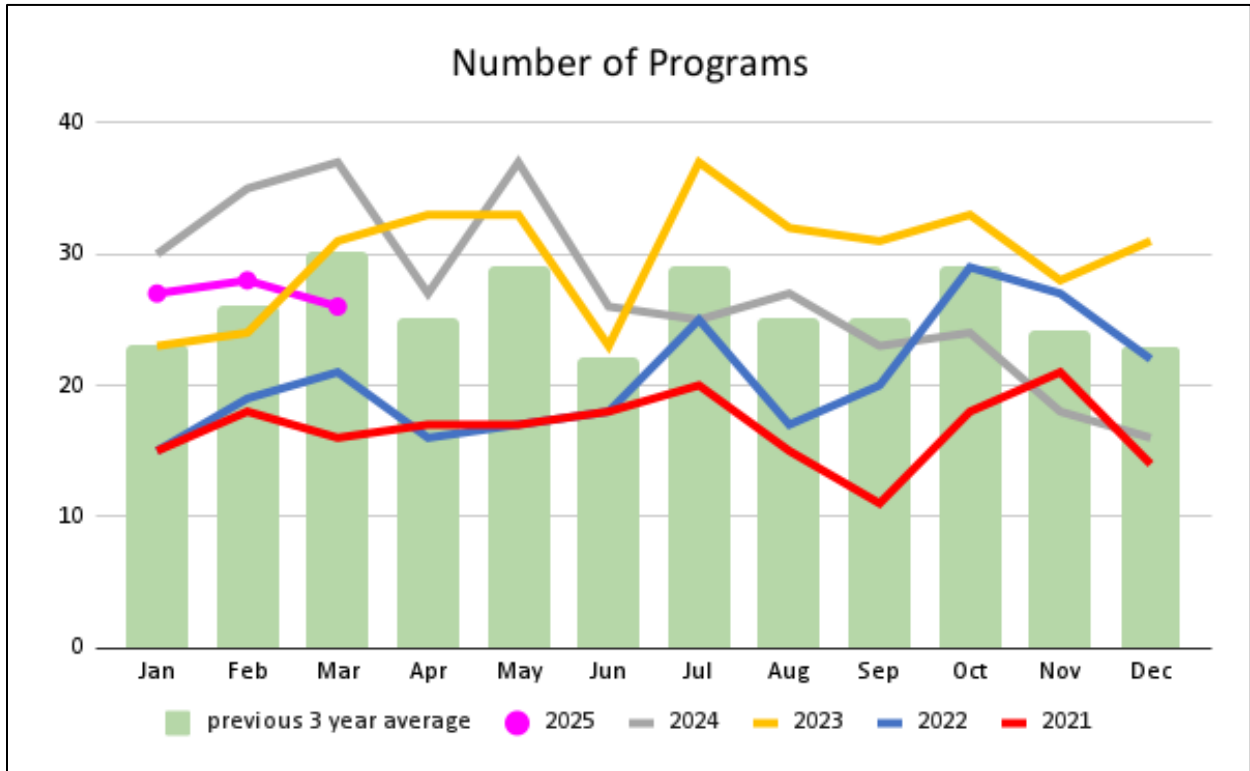
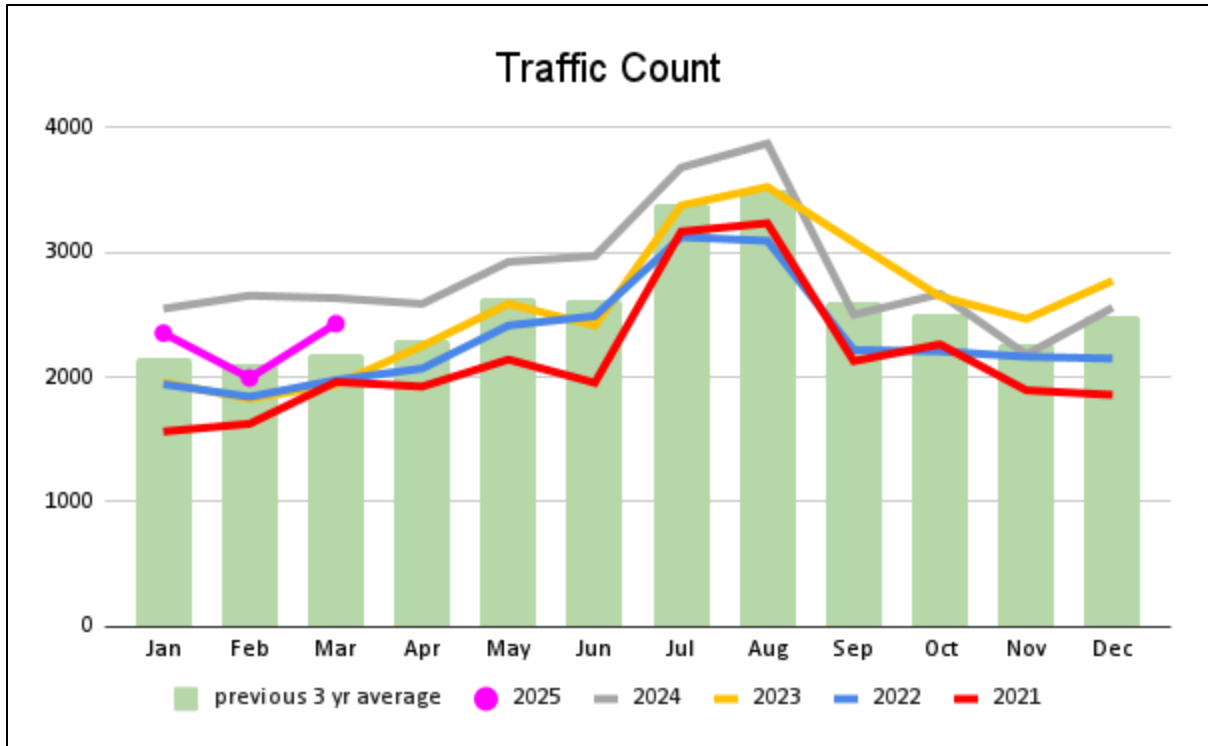
Programs:

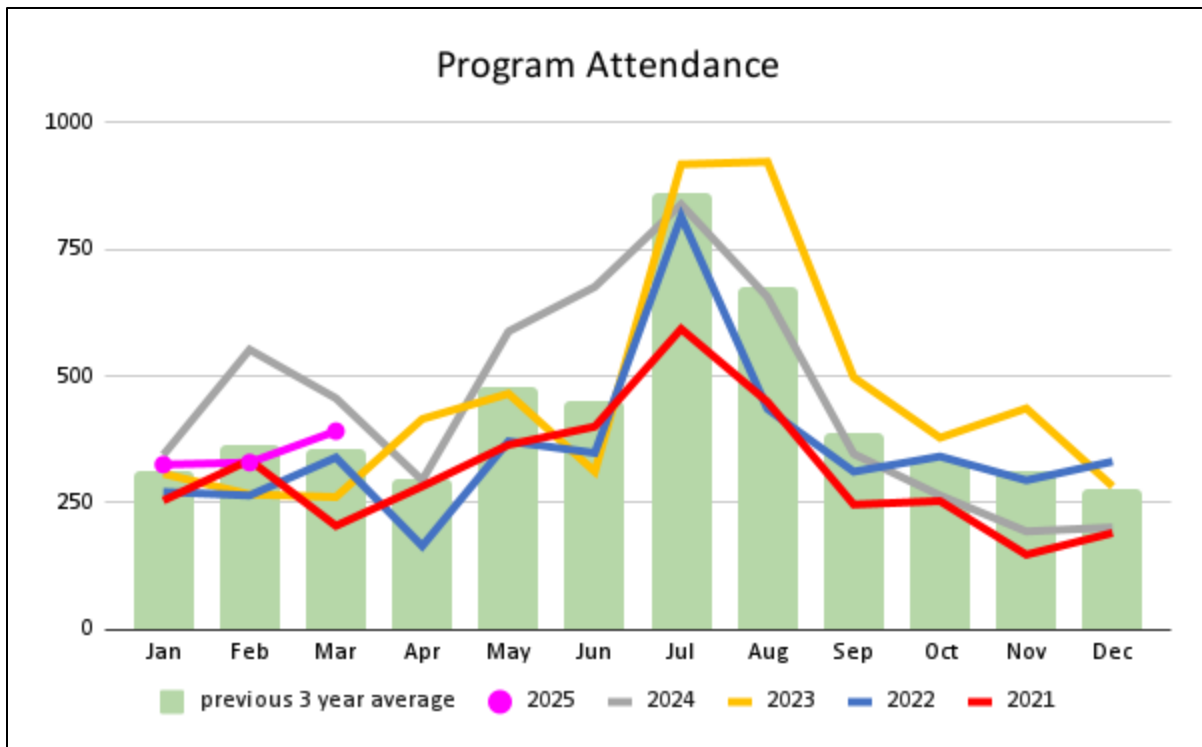
- Tai Chi—average 19 per class
- English Language Learning—average 12 per class
- Saturday Story Time—average 8 kids and 8 adults
- March 19—Read On Fiction Book Club—5 attended
- March 20—Bookmarks! Nonfiction Book Club—11 attended

- March 24—Zoom Around the World Book Club (with CCLA)
- March 26—First session of Reading and Discussion Program: Sustainability—9 attended
- March 27—Tea Time at the Library—9 attended
- March 29—Community Read: Braiding Bookmarks--for Kids!—9 kids, 5 adults attended
- March 30—Roe Jan Writers: Cameron Russell—21 attended
- April 1—Community Read: Indigenous Historian Heather Bruegl: Science vs. Tradition (with CCLA)—18 attended
- April 2—Tech Lab: Photos and Art (with CCLA)—17 attended
- April 5—Introduction to the Canine Good Citizen, a way to train skills to ensure a polite and well-behaved dog—15 attended
- April 6—Film Screening: Free for All: The Public Library—13 attended
- April 13—Tech Lab: Walk-In Tech Clinic Q&A
- April 14—Baseball and the Presidency (with CCLA)

Upcoming Events:

- April 16—Adventure Wednesday with the Greenagers
- April 16—Read On Fiction Book Club
- April 17—Book Marks! Non-Fiction Book Club
- April 17—Children’s Program: Make Your Own Terrarium
- April 18—Literacy Voyage: Garden Explorers
- April 19—Cookbook Club
- April 22—Community Read: Virtual Author Talk w/ Monique Gray Smith (with CCLA)
- April 23—Adventure Wednesday: Art Omi
- April 23—Reading and Discussion Program: Sustainability
- April 24—Tea Time at the Library
- April 26—Community Read: Storytelling Workshop with the Ancram Opera House
- April 27—Community Read: *Braiding Sweetgrass* Book Chat
- April 27—Concert: Christine and Elliot Spero--A Tribute to Joni Mitchell, “Both Sides Now”
- April 28—Zoom Around the World Book Club (with CCLA)
- May 2—Poetry Open Mic Night at the Grange
- May 3—Community Read: Volunteer Fair
- May 4—Community Read: Reducing Our Consumption
- May 5—Franklin D. Roosevelt: Hyde Park Hobbyist (with CCLA)
- May 7—Author Talk: Nancy Kricorian, *The Burning Heart of the World*
- May 8—Art workshop: Pictures of America (1st of 3)
- May 15—Book Marks! Non-Fiction Book Club
- May 15—Art workshop: Pictures of America (2nd of 3)
- May 16—Literacy Voyage: Exploring the Ocean
- May 17—Prose Open Mic
- May 18—Community Read: Understory Walk with Taconic State Park





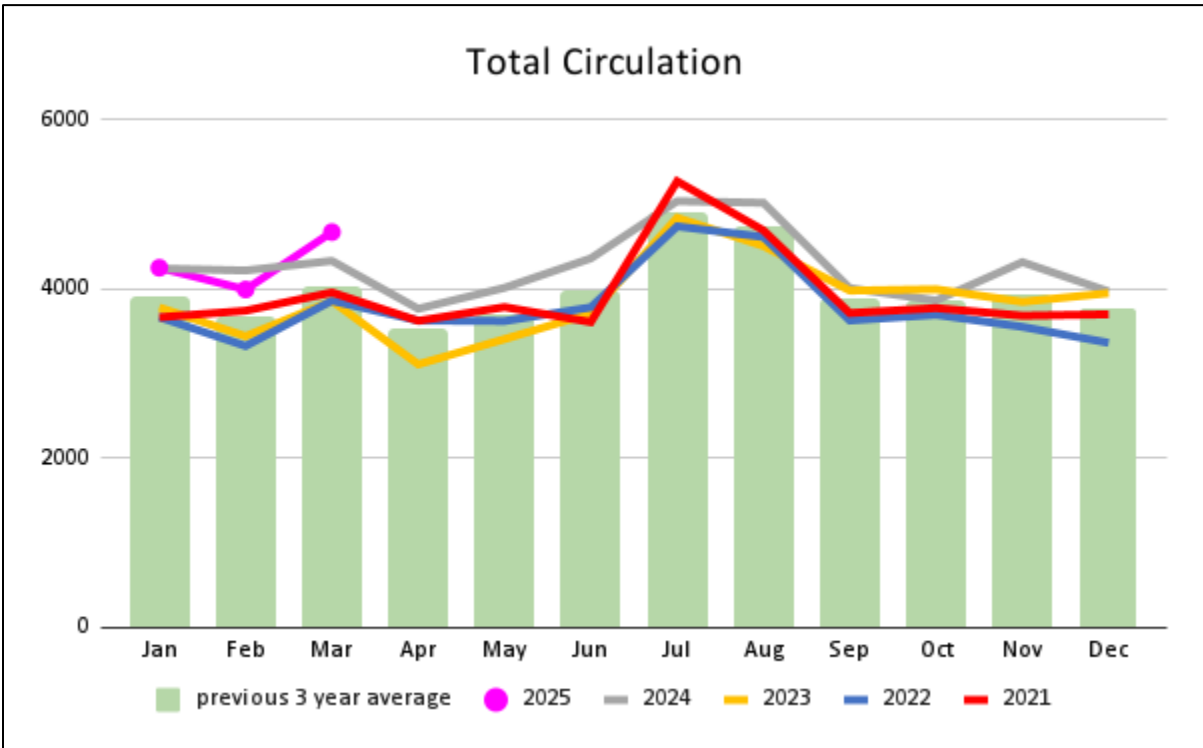
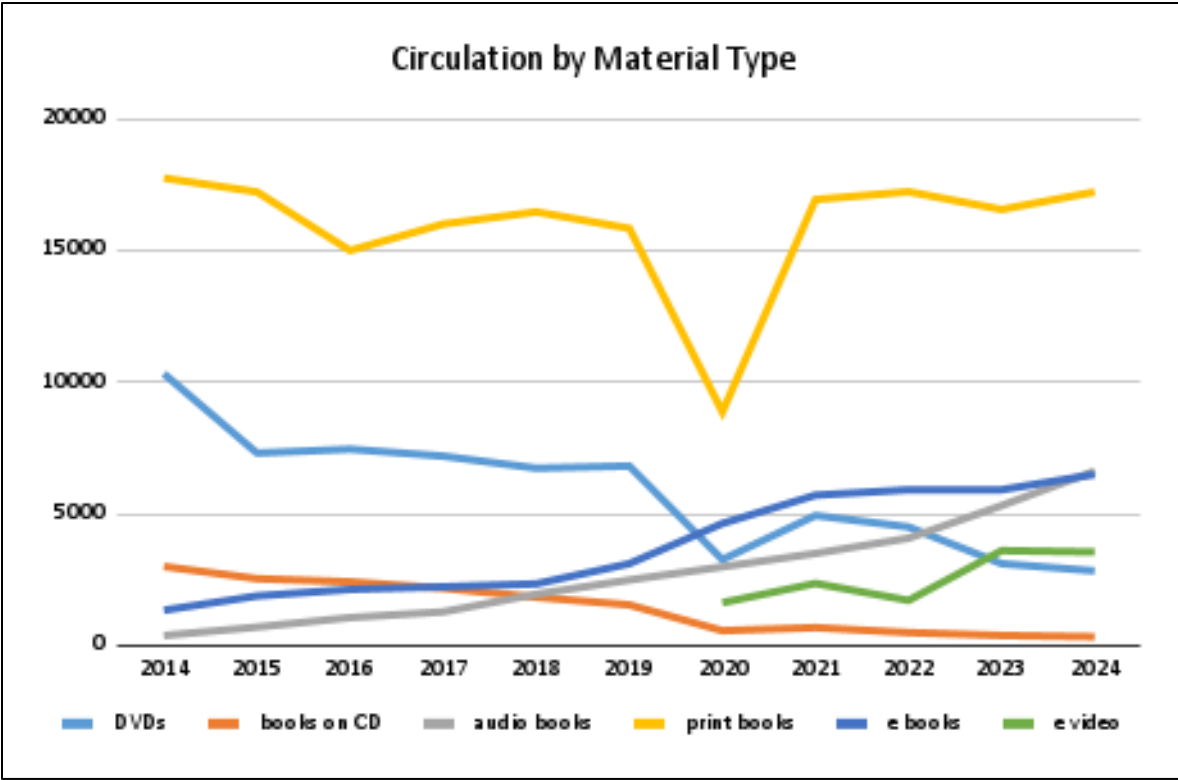
Library Usage:

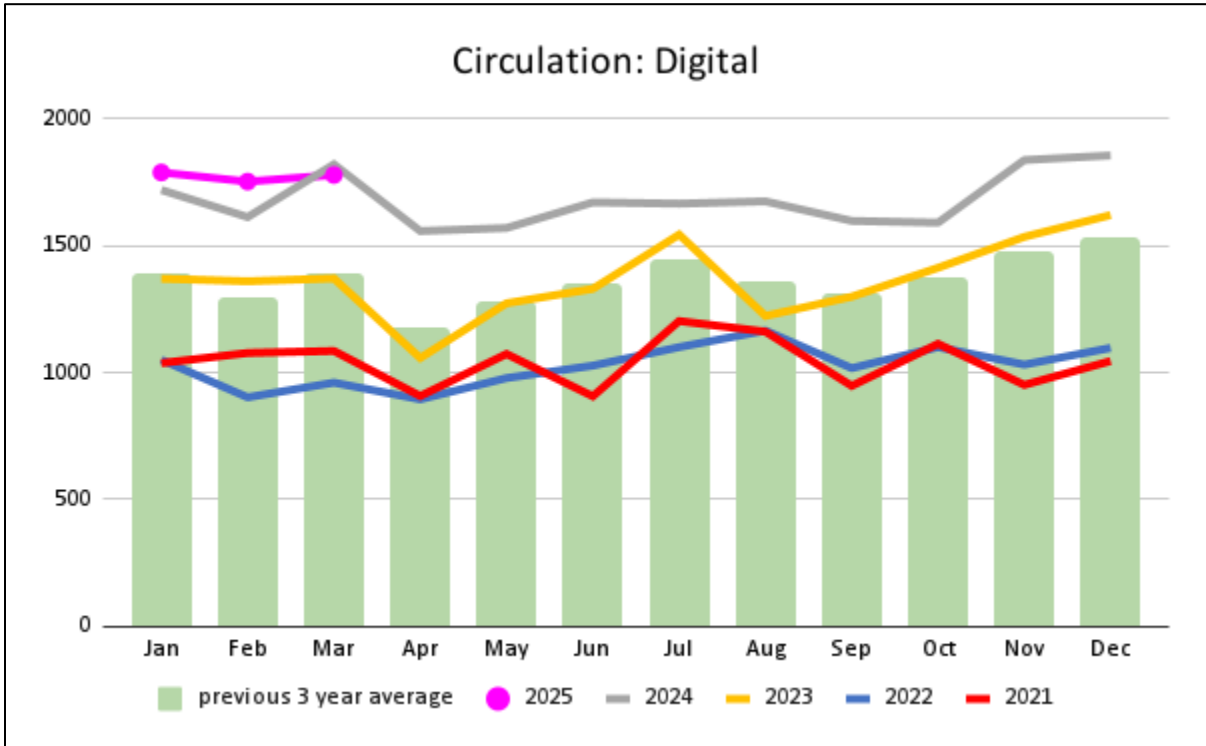
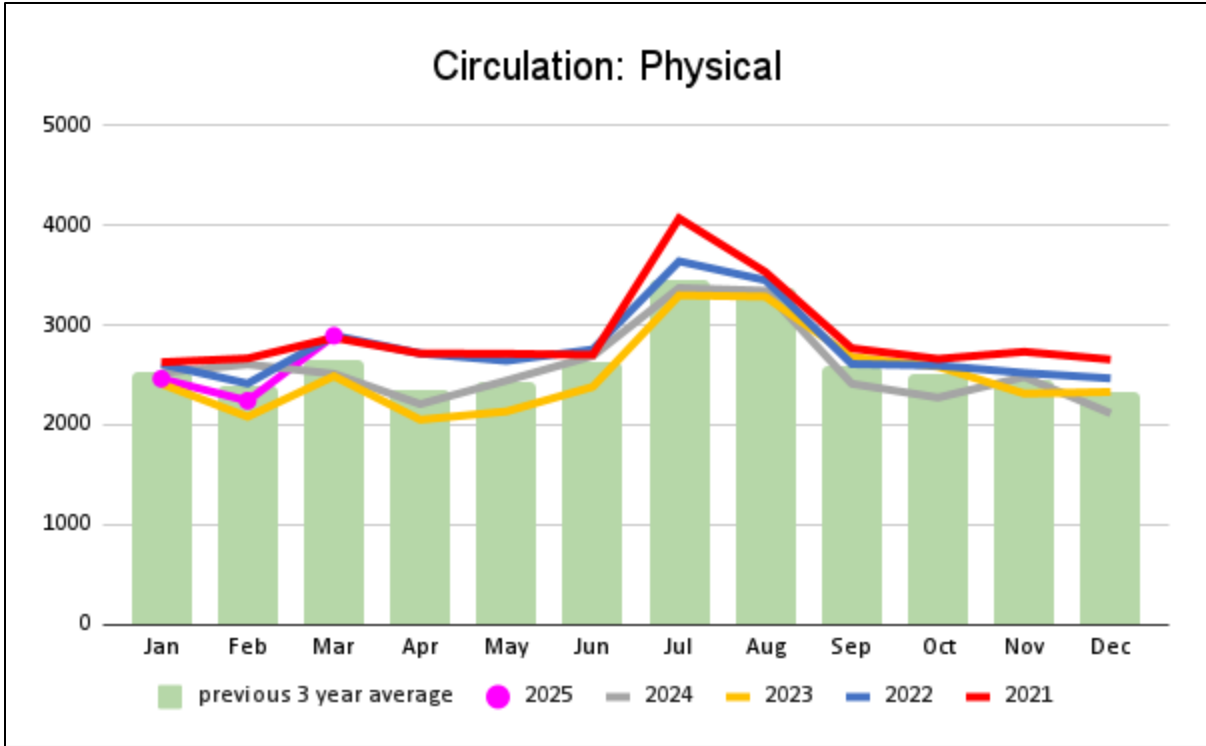
Overall circulation shot up in March, this time led by traditional media, mainly print books. Perhaps the cold, unpleasant weather encouraged more reading? Or perhaps people wanted some form of escape from the news. In any case, circulation of library materials was higher than any other March in recent years, and our 2025 numbers are an undercount, since we still are not able to get our Blackstone Audiobook numbers (we hope to in the next week or two). Even without those numbers, checkouts of audiobooks were up 27% over 2024; audiobooks continue grow in popularity faster than any other format. Checkouts of print and e-books are also up since last year, with checkouts of videos, DVDs, and books on CD down. We are no longer purchasing books on CD (indeed we just weeded a large number of them that have not gone out in years) and are purchasing fewer DVDs, especially since many titles are no longer being released in that format. Paid video streaming services are often the only option for many titles, perhaps accounting for the decline in downloads of videos on Kanopy and hoopla as well, since the most current titles do not appear on those platforms. Or, people are just reading more instead of watching TV.

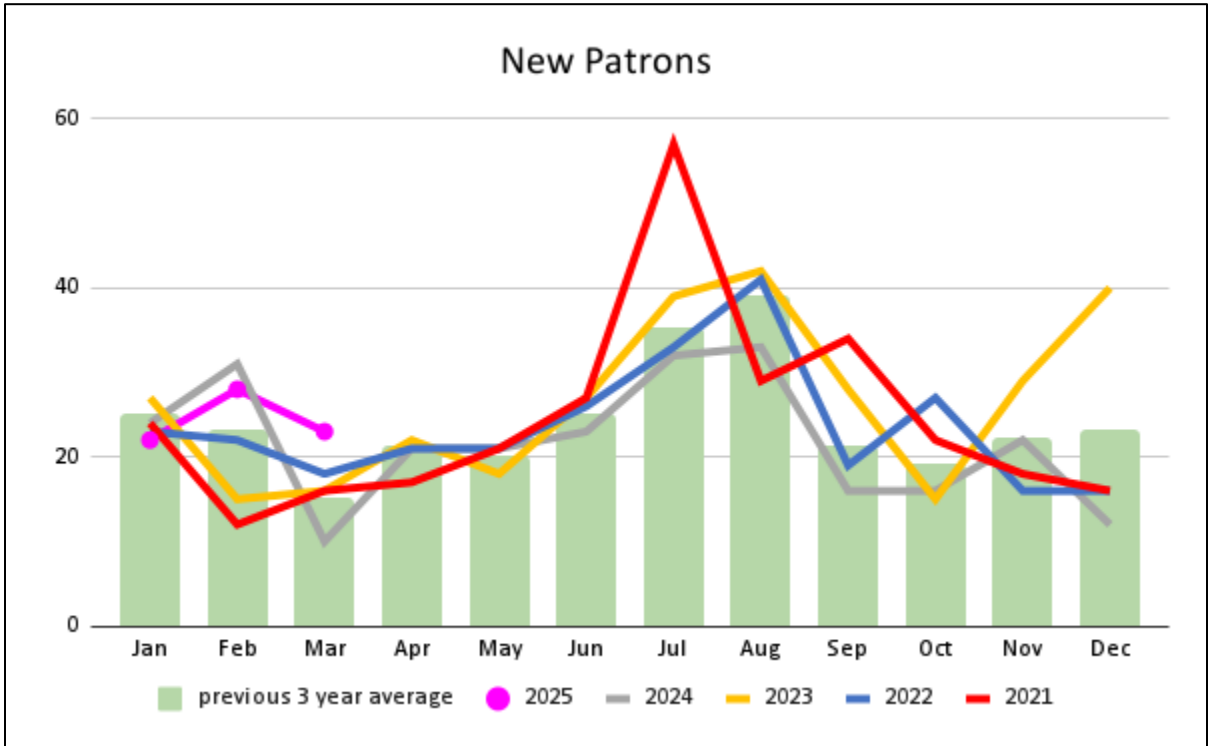
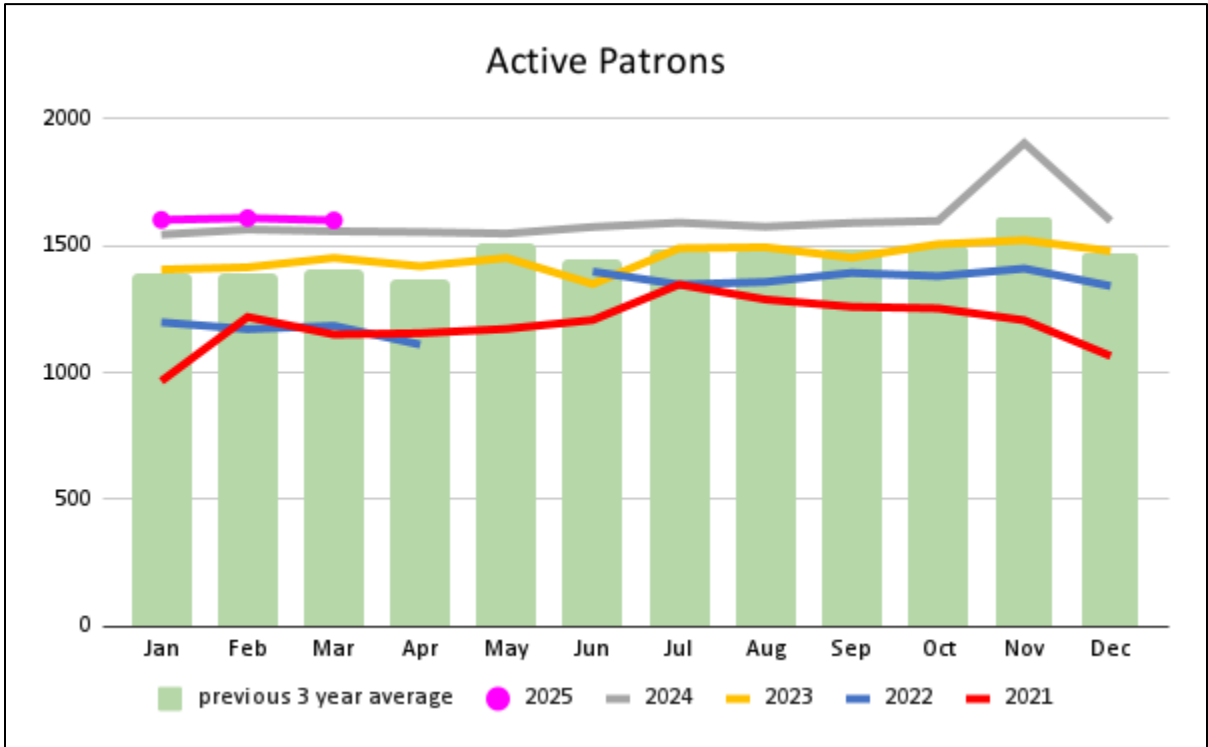
	Mar-25	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	YTD	Previous 3 yr avg	% of previous 3 yr avg
Active patrons (past yr)	1557	1602	1609	1600	ave. 1604	1388	116%
Patrons (unexpired)	1934	1967	1980	1985	ave. 1977	1800	110%
New Patrons	10	22	28	23	73	62	118%
Traffic Count	2633	2352	1992	2428	6,772	6,437	105%
Computer Use	94	42	44	71	157	266	59%
Circulation (physical)	2512	2462	2241	2894	7,597	7,513	101%
Circulation (digital)	1821	1789	1753	1779	5,321	4,056	132%
Museum Passes	9	9	19	8	36	36	100%
Wireless access	416	399	369		768		
Website sessions	453	2138	1756	2045	5,939	5,933	100%
Number of programs	2094	27	28	26	81	78	103%
Program attendance	37	325	329	391	1,045	1020	102%
YouTube views	456	269	152	140	561	407	138%
Notary	165	15	9	12	36	38	95%
Homebound delivery	28	2	0	0	2	2	100%
Digital Navigator appts	0	1	0	3	4	N/A	

Circulation by Material Type

	Mar-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Total	change from previous year	% change
DVDs	268	208	206	275	689	-106	-13%
videos	298	227	229	239	695	-93	-12%
books on CD	22	21	19	23	63	-22	-26%
audiobooks	566	634	542	610	1786	83	5%
print books	1306	1422	1265	1492	4179	33	1%
e books	575	562	561	522	1645	51	3%
museum passes	9	11	19	8	38	-4	-10%
hotspots	7	2	5	6	13	-17	-57%
camping equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%







Staffing and Professional Development:

- Staff completed their required sexual harassment prevention training
- Kate will be doing an internship this summer to complete her MLS—doing it here working on issues of accessibility, especially in regards to our website and digital resources

Building and Grounds

- Larkin says will install our event sign soon—when warms up a bit.
- Leaks have continued—Jay plans to replace roof week of April 14.
- Plan for pavilion and generator approved by Copake Planning Board. Working on getting permit for generator. Copake has waived building permit fees.
- Received paperwork from DASNY on CREST grant for the generator—will submit required documentation after getting final quote for pad from BCI. Herrington's has been here and approved location for tank and also asked about possibility of an underground tank.
- Kim Hausner will be assembling a donated storage bin for our trash and recycling bins that will be on the east end of the library, to provide more space in the kitchen and cleaning supply closet.

Grants/Fundraising:

- Received grant from Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation to continue English language program for another year (\$5400)
- Received grant from CREATE for music programs (\$2500), but did not receive an arts education grant for art workshops. We plan to hold some of these anyway.
- Applied to the Rheinstrom Hill Family Foundation for funding.
- Have heard that Humanities NY funding for our reading and discussion series may not come through due to cut to the National Endowment for the Humanities and their funding of state humanities councils. Humanities NY is crunching the numbers to see what they can do and will let us know soon.

Staff Also

- Tammy worked with Jeanine Dunn to complete annual report to the community, which mailed the week of April 7.
- Robin completed weeding the Books on CD collection, freeing up one whole row of shelves, providing us with much needed space, especially in the nonfiction section. She has begun shifting the fiction to provide space in nonfiction.
- Xondra weeded the children's picture book collection.
- Fran is working on organizing a Volunteer Day, in conjunction with the community read, for May 3.

Columbia County Libraries Association

- Community Read well underway
- Will be attending the Hudson Children's Book Festival on May 3

- Tammy and Thea (Claverack) attended county board of supervisors meeting to support and give thanks for their resolution in support of county libraries and state and federal funding
- Did not receive Berkshire Taconic grant; will apply to Rheinstrom Hill Family Foundation for funding for NewsBank

MHLS

- Launching new mobile app, customizable by library, on May 1. App can be downloaded now from the Apple store or Google Play store
- Planning Mid-Hudson Library System road trip for this summer, and tied to the app. This initiative encourages community members to visit the 70 library buildings of the member libraries during the program timeframe, from June 6 through October 18, 2025. Each library will have a stamp for the passport, as well as souvenirs and maps.