

2017 SUMMER PROGRAMS
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
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The Children's Services Department had another great summer of programming and Summer Reading Club this year! We offered new kinds of programs throughout the summer as well as providing the community with their favorites.

This summer's Reading Program theme was "**Build A Better World.**" It was a theme that promoted S.T.E.M. education as well as promoting other themes like recycling, planting and architecture.

We conducted the universal Reading Club for all (birth to entering 5th grade) similar to the one we created last year. All registrants still read at home. They were given the opportunity to write reports and/or draw pictures to submit. They also had the option of doing one-to-one book discussions with volunteers about the books they submitted reports for as they came in once a week for prizes. In previous years we had only the older children, entering 2nd through 5th, submit a report/picture and participate in book discussions with volunteers. This summer all aged children could submit reports/pictures. Participants could upload those as well. Obviously, the really young participants got help from their parents. All participants received prizes for each week they showed.

We had Wandoo Reader again this year as our online registration tool that our patrons used to register their children and gave them the option to participate online in the Reading Club as well. All parents were required to fill out the basic on line registration form through the Wandoo Reader link at our Library's website. This year we had **172** online registrants which was a little lower than last year's numbers. Once the Reading Club began on June 27th, books read at home could then be logged online at Wandoo Reader. Pictures drawn by the children could be uploaded at Wandoo Reader and children could also type their reports and submit them for our retrieval. We felt it was too soon to fully switch to online Reading Club participation and still made paper reading logs and report /picture forms available for participants to write out their book titles and reports on. Either way, all children came back to the library once a week for the 4 weeks of the Club. With a system that had both types of participants signing in together & then being assigned a volunteer to report with, both forms of the Club (online and on paper) took part side-by-side in an orderly and successful manner. **According to statistics retrieved from Wandoo Reader, 68 fully participated online and 104 still used the paper reading logs and report forms. (Last summer 95 children fully participated online and 89 still used the paper reading logs and report/picture forms. Interesting!)**

An additional fun Wandoo feature was that the child could build their own online avatar. The more books a child logged online, the more points he/she received in their Wandoo account. Those points "bought" them parts and items to help build and change the avatar. Another fun incentive directly tied into the Reading Club was the use of our PLINKO board. Each week that a child came to the Library and submitted a report and/or picture (online or on paper), they received 1 ticket. That ticket gave them 1 turn at the PLINKO board to win a special prize. We also continued our yearly tradition of *The Question of The Day*. Every child coming into the Library during Reading Club weeks answered a question posted at the Children's Librarian's Desk for an additional prize

In conclusion, we felt what was originally clunky with the online registration tool last year, was more familiar to us this year. It seemed easy for patrons to use when registering and fun for the children to use when they participated. Patron comments included opinions that parents and children enjoyed use of the online interface. There were also parents that stayed with the original option of participating because they wanted their children to continue writing out books listed and reports instead of just typing.

We kicked off our summer this year with Chris Merwin, a New York musician who had numerous instruments from around the world to share with his audience. In addition to our Summer Reading Club we had our ever popular Summer Picture Book Storytime that took place on Wednesdays. Older children attended the Build a Better Taco program where they painted a taco shell with chocolate and filled it with candy and/or fruit. The older children also had a Build a Better Light House craft where they built a light-house with recyclable materials and added a real light to it. The younger ones, along with parents, had fun with Mommy & Me Preschool Yoga, Baby Sign Language, and Preschool Sign Language classes. We also had the popular *A Time For Kids, Inc.*, to conduct a nice Reading Club themed program. Our Final Show for all our participants was *The Magic and Comedy of Jim McClenahan*. The performer wowed the audience some magic, juggling and comedy. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed it!

In early August we also had our popular Library on the Lawn Program where the little ones could play with bubbles, hoola hoops, jump rope, paints and other fun things in the summer sun. In August we also conducted a Perler Bead craft., a Walk-In Board Game Day, Reptiles Rock program, Toddler/Preschooler Sign Language classes, a Toddler Yoga class, a Lobster Roll cake program, and an impromptu, exciting viewing of the Solar Eclipse!

Each and every year, we have relied on the availability and help from Middle School and High School student volunteers. If not for those volunteers, we would not be able to run the Summer Reading Club as smoothly as we do. They are also very helpful when it comes to the story times and crafts/activities that we have available through out the summer. This past summer we had 62 volunteers help us out and we greatly appreciate all they've done for us.

During the month of August the Children's Staff made a visit to Plainedge Middle School and conducted a program for children (from elementary through high school) for the district's Special Needs Summer Program. We look forward to visiting Plainedge Middle School for their Special Needs Summer Program next year.

All in all, it was a very successful, busy and enjoyable summer here in Children's Services. In late September, Senator Kemp Hannon's Office will be here hosting an Operation SAFE Child program where ID cards can be made for each child whose family participates. It was very popular and we look forward to having it here again. We are already moving on to planning and/or conducting exciting programs like our Storytimes, Play Groups, and Walk-In-Programs. We also look forward to providing Arts & crafts, Halloween Ceramics, new S.T.E.M. based Programs and fun Food Classes for the upcoming fall & winter seasons. Soon our Fall Festival will be here & we hope to bring in hundreds of people in for that event as we generally do each year! The Children's Department is also conducting a contest that will coincide with the Fall Festival. We are asking the community to decorate a large paper person as their favorite book character. All book character entries will be judged during our Fall Festival on November 7th, 2017.