

NHLTA Library of the Year Application



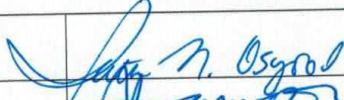
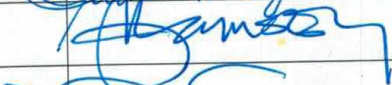

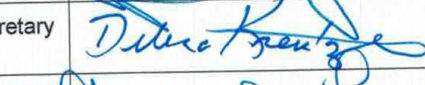

Tucker Free Library
Educating, Engaging,
Entertaining Henniker since 1904

Library of the Year: 2018 NOMINATION OF TUCKER FREE LIBRARY
31 Western Avenue
PO Box 688
Henniker, NH 03242

Library Contact: Patti N. Osgood, Chair
Tucker Free Library
Board of Trustees
188 Foster Hill Road
Henniker, NH 03242

patti.n.osgood@gmail.com
603-848-3702

Current Board Members and Signatures Supporting Application:

Patti N. Osgood, Chair	
Jamie Ramsey, Vice Chair	
John Capuco, Treasurer	
Debra Kreutzer, Co-Recording Secretary	
Angelica Ladd, Co-Recording Secretary	

Narrative Supporting the Nomination

- 1) Has demonstrated expansion and improvement of services and technology
- 2) Has enhanced service to previously under-served part of the community
- 3) Has developed partnerships with other libraries and/or community organizations
- 4) Has proven value to the community measured by relationships with and support from town officials and members of the community
- 5) Maintains membership in NHLTA

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SUMMARY

The board of trustees of the Tucker Free Library (TFL) is extremely pleased to nominate the Tucker Free Library as the NHLTA Library of the Year. This nomination has the unanimous support of all the board members named above. We are proud to share that the TFL has made significant achievements under all of the criteria set forth by NHLTA for this award. Specific achievements are highlighted below.

The TFL has served the Town of Henniker for 114 years as a place of learning, leisure, social and intellectual interaction. Under the leadership of its current Director, Lynn Piotrowicz (M.A., M.L.S.) and a dedicated staff that has served for many years, TFL has consistently served increasing segments of the population, and is constantly exploring opportunities and challenges to meet the ever-changing needs of the community. The staff has kept pace with and promoted emerging technologies; built the capacity of individuals and institutions in Henniker; and served as a beacon of collaboration and cooperation both within our community and across the State of New Hampshire.

In these difficult and often austere economic times across the country, many public libraries are experiencing reduced funding and waning public support. They are often among the first victims of limited tax dollars and increasing competition for discretionary funding. We are proud that, based on a history of efficiency, consistent effort and success at seeking external (grant) funds, and judicious management of every penny provided by the Town of Henniker, the community this year demonstrated its overwhelming support for the TFL by passing a number of costly warrant articles in its Town Meeting that will enable maintaining, updating and exploring expansion of the TFL. Such support does not come lightly, and is a direct reflection of the very high esteem with which TFL is held by the entire town.

With its unanimous support for this nomination, the board of trustees of the TFL is pleased to present some of the major achievements made by TFL.

Nomination Criteria - Illustrative Achievements

1) Has demonstrated expansion and improvement of services and technology

a) TFL Staff:

- Our staff has worked tirelessly to realize the goals of trustees, including expanding evening and weekend hours to meet the needs of the community. The commitment of the staff is reflected in their excellent attendance record (in six months only 2.5 hours of sick time were used, and that for scheduled medical appointments, not call-ins). All staff positions have been held for multiple years.
- Staff members actively participate in Continuing Education opportunities aimed at improving their individual and collective abilities to increase and improve the services offered by TFL. These include: regional conferences, special boot camps, online webinars, and professional development opportunities such as New England Library Leadership Symposium, MIT Apps Boot camp, CLNH Conference, and Storyteller Festival in Keene. Staff members are role models in their constant quest for knowledge and skills.



- The TFL staff proudly prioritizes and performs all 'patron services' tasks, regardless of the shift, to efficiently meet all the information needs of the community.
- All staff members maximize their opportunities to build reading lists and make recommendations to patrons via the TFL online catalog, the TFL website, or in-person.

b) Technology:

- The staff has worked to enhance the library website, adopting a user-friendly WordPress format and learning to manipulate many plug-ins, the most popular being the Events Calendar. Staff members have been called on by other libraries to provide guidance in the utilization of this plug-in, and to serve as a general resource on WordPress to the greater NH library community.
- TFL has been an early adopter of new technology. To reduce computing hardware and software expenses, the library mounted a "thin-client" system - a low-cost computing network that uses one server for all processing. The thin-client environment maximizes the potential of one computer which runs a multitude of devices through remote server software. New technology now allows for enhanced Wi-Fi service.

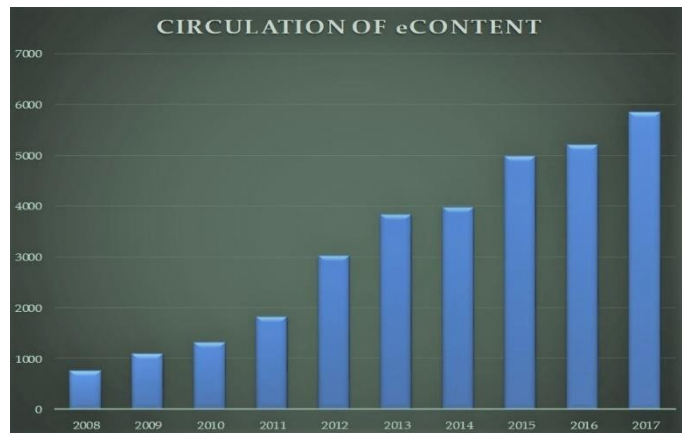
c) Events/Services:

- TFL staff has built a solid brand in “Sundays at the Library,” successfully identifying programs of interest to the community, promoting those programs, and moving a lot of furniture to meet the growing audience at those presentations.
- Many STEAM activities have been brought to our patrons through the Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces Grant. The goal of the grant was to design a space where people can engage in informal, participatory, active learning opportunities that also strengthen social connections. The Tucker Free Library was selected from over 100 applicants to receive \$5100.00 to build a community engagement space, and training support through monthly educational webinars on all facets of community engagement. The 18-month program culminated with the purchase of furnishing, equipment, and supplies to create the TFL KidSpace: A Playground for the Mind. Participating in this grant program has allowed TFL staff to connect with families in a fun, yet educational way. The TFL KidSpace ties in with the Public Library Association campaign “Every Child Ready to Read” which promotes development of literacy skills through TALKING, SINGING, READING, WRITING, & PLAYING.

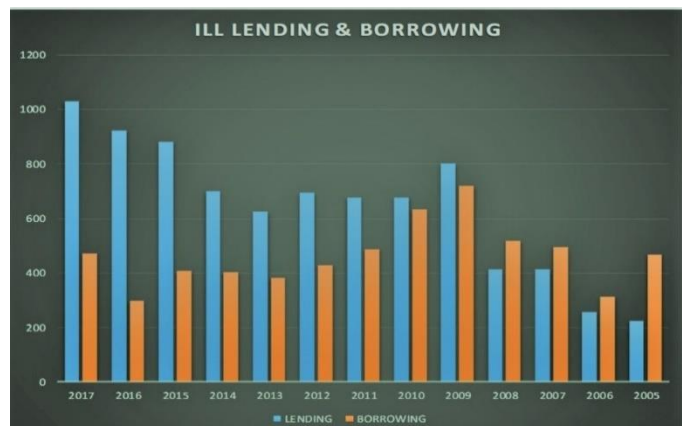
“We are so excited that Henniker kids can push the threshold of learning, achieving developmental milestones COVERTLY when they engage with our STEAM manipulators,” states Piotrowicz, library director. “I feel that we achieved our objective magnificently, creating a family play and learning space designed to inspire and spark the intellectual, social, and creative development of our youngest minds!”

d) Collection:

- The Tucker Free Library boasts a quality collection of 18,990 items, of which 10,013 (53%) have been added to the collection since January 2011. TFL was a first round adopter of the NH Downloadable book program and has seen the circulation of these materials steadily increase from 759 in 2008 to 5,853 in 2017.



- The Tucker Free Library is an excellent resource for libraries in the state, providing 1,031 items through the interlibrary loan system in 2017 while requesting 471 items for our patrons.



- The Tucker Free Library was an early adopter of innovative marketing of materials: the staff have actively identified and labeled all series within our collection. The staff coordinated the conversion of the collection from strictly Dewey Decimal to a Dewey-Lite System that organizes like materials in common areas. Library staff have talked at length about the benefits of this system with other librarians who traveled to Henniker to see Dewey-Lite in action, and at several regional continuing education opportunities.

2) Has enhanced services to a previously underserved part of the community

a) Henniker Community at Large:

- Upon the 2013 completion of the Tucker Free Library revitalization, adults looking for a place to work, access the internet, or to sit quietly reading now have the Ann Soderstrom Media Center and Quiet Area at their disposal. The reappropriation of space was integral to the expansion of hours, the creation of the 'Sundays at the Library' brand, and development of a patron-friendly space. No longer worrying about disrupting patrons working on the Main Floor, circulation desk staff can now fully engage with patrons, meeting their needs for social interaction, information, training on NH Downloadable, and assisting with reference/reader advisory services.
- As part of the 'Sundays at the Library' brand, family oriented and general interest programs have been included. Magicians, musicians, storytellers, and puppeteers have enjoyed rousing audiences of all ages. These "Sundays at the Library" programs have enjoyed enormous success with as many as 90 people in the audience.



b) Children and Youth:

- TFL recently completed the creation of a smart space for community engagement through an 18-month grant offered by WebJunction, OCLC, IMLS, and ASRL. The objective of this area is to provide a location in the community that allows for learning through talking, reading, writing, singing, and playing! STEAM engagers were purchased that provide the opportunity for covert learning through engaged play. The TFL KidSpace has become a PLAYGROUND FOR THE MIND! It is an active learning space designed to encourage families to engage with their kids through cooperative play. The TFL

KidSpace consists of building blocks of all sizes, shapes, and textures, math and science games, puzzles, art and music activities, as well as small robot/coding devices for kids, toddler thru early teens.

TFL KIDSPACE: A PLAYGROUND FOR THE MIND!



- Programming in the Children's' Department includes weekly story time and a summer reading program, both with ever-increasing participation. Tucker Free Library also promotes the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Initiative.

Tucker Free Library — Making a difference for Henniker Families



Hailey
A reading superstar!

"I want my children to participate in the 1,000 Books program because I want to instill a love for reading at an early age. The more books we read the more we learn, the more words we are introduced to, the larger their vocabulary becomes. Each book takes us to new conversations and contributes to the way we play. An added bonus, we get to sit close, snuggle, and bond over a good book." Kristin, mom.



Tucker Free Library — Making a difference for Henniker Families



Olivia
A reading superstar!

The 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Program (1000BooksB4K) encourages parents to provide these positive, nurturing experiences regularly. Not only do the benefits of reading to pre-kindergarten children include long term educational success, but also promotes a lifelong love of books and reading! The 1000 Books Foundation is a non-profit whose mission is to encourage the parent and child bonding through reading.



Tucker Free Library — Making a difference for Henniker Families



OLIVIA
Our latest scholar!

Olivia took part in the program in hopes to boost learning potential by encouraging reading with our children.



Tucker Free Library — Making a difference for Henniker Families



LILY & HANNAH
Our latest scholars!

"We enjoy reading together each day and it was great to cross off the books as we read them. A wonderful activity to do together."
Colleen Gagnon, mother



- Located next to the Henniker Community School, TFL provides a destination for older school age children. The library has a no bullying policy to provide neighborhood kids a safe and secure environment. Racing to the library after school, kids have 8 computers, 4 Chromebooks, and an Xbox - all of which also see heavy use on rainy days and weekends. Some kids even seek out quiet corners and can be found reading, drawing, or working on homework.

HENNIKER KIDS ENJOYING TFL!





c) Seniors:

- In an effort to bring our seniors into the library more regularly, TFL partnered with Henniker's White Birch Community Center to engage in monthly programs. The two organizations have partnered for five years, offering discussions on a wide variety of TED talks. Many of the seniors in attendance have become regular library patrons and have attended other programs offered at the library. The Tucker Free Library also provides materials to support the White Birch Senior book group.



When members of the Henniker community opened the February White Birch newsletter, they were greeted by a beautiful love story. This story is especially exciting because it began at a program at the Tucker Free Library. For five years, the WB seniors and Library Director have been meeting on the third Thursday of the month at the library to discuss a wide and varied range of issues.

A White Birch Love Story



AND SOMETIMES LOVE HAPPENS AT OUR LIBRARY!

"We have shared some very touching stories and learned a great deal from each other. Together we have learned how important it is to have connections in life -- even when every fiber of your being wants to retreat into solitude. We have learned how resilient people are, sharing stories about their most difficult moments. We have learned that to be human means you have to be open to vulnerability to reap the rewards of an authentic life."

Lynn Piotrowicz, Director

d) Disabled:

- TFL offers 'Home Delivery' to disabled community members: we take this responsibility seriously. Even on weekends, staff drops off movies and other materials to our patrons who can't get to the library. We have also adjusted circulation policies to allow for extended check-out periods, consideration of limitations on check-outs, and flexibility when these patrons have difficulty returning materials on time.

3) Has developed partnerships with other libraries and/or community organizations

a) Sharing Knowledge and Expertise:

- When time permits, the Director participates in projects to support other NH organizations. This includes serving as a grant reader.

"It was so nice to meet you in person last year and have a personal tour of the beautiful and historic Tucker Free Library. I wanted to ask if you would be interested in being a panelist for a [NH State Council on the Arts](#) upcoming grant panel. Our [ARTS Cultural Conservation grants](#), are for the conservation of publicly owned historic artworks, and access to historic buildings that provide arts programming. As you may remember, the funds come from the sale of the NH Moose License plates. NHSCA receives a small portion of all the sales of these license plates to be used for conservation."

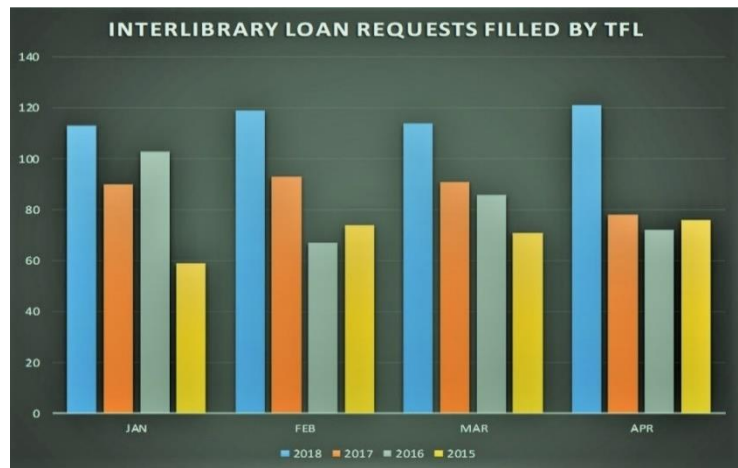
- The TFL Director has offered Continuing Education opportunities to peer groups throughout the state. These include programs on the new public library narrative, customer service, reorganizing the library collection for easier patron access, creating a patron-centric service philosophy, building projects emphasizing the creative use of space on a budget, and accentuating the rising popularity of library programs.

"Thank you so much for preparing and presenting on customer service to our staff on Monday. I especially appreciate your willingness to share so much about yourself and your staff. The mantra of Customer Service gets beaten to death for many library workers, but you put a fresh and extremely insightful face on the concept. This was our first all day all staff meeting and we had a lot of takeaways that will change the way we do things."

- The staff of the Tucker Free Library has been an active member of the NH Downloadable Consortium. From serving on the acquisitions team to working on the maintenance of the collection, the staff has been actively advocating for the expansion of this service with patrons as well as throughout the state library community.

b) Sharing Materials:

- The staff of the Tucker Free Library has been actively cultivating material sharing partnerships (ILL relationships) since the NH State Library ILL system failed in December 2017. Along with sharing login information with neighboring libraries, the staff has been working to facilitate a lending process with fellow Apollo ILS libraries in NH. Apollo offers a package called VersaCat™. This software allows libraries to share catalog information, make requests, and receive ILL's directly through our own catalog page. TFL has relationships with 37 libraries, 14 of which are Apollo VersaCat™ partners.



4) Has proven value to the community measured by relationship with and support from town officials and members of the community

a) Positive Feedback Examples:

- Community members, state politicians, staff, business leaders and more have consistently expressed their support for and appreciation of TFL - its services, programs, collection, facilities and most important, its commitment to the community. The excerpts from letters and notes below are just a few examples of such appreciation:

Tucker Free Library — Making a difference for Henniker Business



"I have had the good fortune of utilizing the document delivery service at TFL. This service has helped me in obtaining important journal articles and book chapters valuable to the research projects I have had to complete in my professional work. And as with all the other useful services provided these days at TFL, the service has been delivered with efficiency and the positive spirit that pervades TFL. Thanks folks!"

Jack Bopp, MS, CRC, CLCP. Rehabilitation Services Associates, LLC

- *"My parents would bring me to the library when I was growing up. This led me to feel like this place is more of a home to me, not just a job. I always hope to work here as long as possible even though I do have another full time job and it means working 7 day weeks." Hugh Russell, employee since high school, five years ago.*
- *"What strikes me most is the obvious love you, your staff, and the trustees have for the library, both as a vital town institution and a beautiful building, old though it may be." Patron and community leader.*
- *"Can't tell you - but will - what a fantastic library you've engineered. It's just a delight and I appreciate it on so many levels!" Patron*

- *“I’ve really appreciated how you have sent me lists of the books you’ve purchased with this fund. I think you’re making really, really excellent choices. I know my father-in-law would have been pleased. I’ve often wished I were near enough to borrow some.” Family contact for a long-standing Trust Fund.*
- *“Be it known that the New Hampshire Senate extends its congratulations to the Tucker Free Library Henniker in Recognition of: The hard work and dedication of undertaking and achieving a successful stewardship and improvements to an important community and historical building.” Senator Dan Feltes, District 15*
- TFL staff members have successfully competed for four state and two national grants to support enhancements of the library building, programs, and continuing education. *“Your own grant applications were very thorough and we think you would make a great panelist. We are looking for qualified panelists who have experience and an understanding of the importance for preserving historic structures, historic artworks, and providing access to historical community buildings. We would love to have you sit on the panel if you are available.” NHSCA Representative*

b) Town Officials and Voter Actions:



- Local tradesmen have volunteered to assist library staff achieve project objectives. This includes Jon Routon Painting, Marc Aucoin Electric, and Keith DeMoura of KND Metals & More, Inc. installing two restored historic lamp posts. A local gardening expert oversees NEC students organize and maintain garden areas of the TFL grounds.



- At this year's Town Meeting, while desperately looking for creative ways to hold the line on spending, with the support of the Board of Selectmen, Henniker voters authorized action and approved funds to consider upgrades to the TFL facility and possible expansion/build-out of space.



5) Maintains membership in NHLTA

TFL is a member in good standing of NHLTA.