

Green Mountain Library Consortium

Annual Report

May 2021

May 2021 brings us into the 15th month of libraries serving patrons under various Covid-19 safety precautions. These long months have been incredibly difficult for librarians and patrons to navigate. We at GMLC want to congratulate and express our admiration to all libraries whose staff worked tirelessly to keep Vermonters informed and able to get the reading and listening materials that they wanted. It surely has been made ever so clear that the digital collection we call LUV is not only important but also an essential collection for libraries to offer from now on.

We thank our members for their trust in us and for their belief in the efficacy of our consortium model. At this moment it is abundantly clear that what we do together is appreciated by so many Vermonters.

As always, we are proud of our work and appreciate the endless hours of our many volunteers. Our mission is *“To provide Vermont's libraries with access to goods and services otherwise unattainable through the power of partnerships and collective purchasing.* This is summed up in the consortium's tagline: **Vermont Libraries, Working Together.**

Here are the reports on our various projects:

LUV

Our statistics show that from April 30, 2020 to May 1, 2021 LUV patrons checked out 538,641 total digital items consisting of 245,816 eBooks and 291,723 audio books from our collection of 45,360 unique titles and 50,541 copies. This includes the collection of copyright free books in a special collection of *Classics* and the *Guttenberg Library*. In addition, with grants from the Samara Fund for LGBTQ titles, the Vermont Humanities Council, and IMLS/VTLIB we have been able to add many new titles and special collections. You can see more details in the Listen Up! Vermont Spending section of this report.

These statistics show a 21% increase in total checkouts from the same period one year ago. This represents a 29% increase in ebook circulation and a 14% increase in audiobooks. Interestingly, this shows that 19% more audios were checked-out than eBooks, and 34% more audios were checked out in the current yearly period over the same period a year ago.

Mango Languages

There are currently 23 GMLC libraries enrolled in the Mango Languages service, with 5 libraries added this year. During the calendar year 2020 there were:

- Total number of sessions: 3769
- Mobile Sessions: 1703
- Average session length: 13 minutes

The most popular language learning sessions were French, Latin American Spanish, Italian and Russian, followed by Japanese, German and Mandarin Chinese.

Mango Languages provides a wide variety of courses for many different languages and learning levels. More information about Mango Languages is available on the GMLC website.

www.gmlc.org.

Overdrive Advantage

The influence of closed library buildings and dependence on digital collections in 2020 encouraged many libraries to subscribe to the Overdrive Advantage service and to purchase an amazing 6410 titles and to spend a mind boggling \$219,786! The previous year the number of titles was 2484 totaling \$117,000. This program went from 41 libraries participating to 54. GMLC welcomes these “Advantage Libraries” and appreciates what they do. Their buying titles for their own patrons reduces holds on the overall LUV Collection while it serves their patrons well. To find out more about this program visit our website at gmlc.org.

VOKAL

The VOKAL consortium consists of 60 libraries. Libraries requesting membership are considered on a case-by-case basis and may be added at the VOKAL Executive Committee’s discretion with a member library as sponsor. This year we are pleased to announce the addition of the Swanton Library and the Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile. In 2021 we will also be adding the Fletcher Free Library and Lincoln Library bringing our number of libraries to 62!

Circulation for the last year (even during the pandemic!) was 1.3 million items. The system contains 430,000 unique titles and 1.23 million items. 133,000 patrons are active in the system and the average daily circulation is 3,000 items (outgoing only).

The VOKAL Executive Committee consists of Wendy Hysko (Brownell Library), Kim Peine (Dorothy Alling Library), and Richard Pritsky (Carpenter-Carse Library).

Over the years VOKAL has sponsored and co-sponsored many development requests to improve the VOKAL system and these developments have been included in the standard releases of Koha to benefit libraries around the world. The ability to add an additional guarantor on an account was a VOKAL sponsored development implemented in version 19.11. With the GMLC Delivery Service providing a reduction in postage costs, enhancements to patron-initiated holds was introduced in version 20.11. This will allow other libraries within their home group to place holds in the future.

The most recent enhancement in development will address being able to set non-priority holds so that patrons are able to renew items that have a hold waiting for something that can wait, such as further cataloging or bindery work and the ability to group item types in circulation rules.

2021 also brings the enhancement of Aspen Discovery which will provide comprehensive access to catalog items, e-content and web resources, providing a much-improved patron experience. Currently 39 libraries are in the process of setting up their Aspen enhancements and we will offer it as an option to other VOKAL libraries in the future.

The Circulation Committee chaired by Brownell Library’s Alison Pierce continues to develop circulation standards for the consortium. The Cataloging Committee chaired by Dorothy Alling Library’s Debbie Roderer continues to train library staff on VOKAL cataloging standards. The Consortium Committee chaired by Wendy Hysko meets prior to each new Koha release to discuss new system preferences. The VOKAL Help Committee assists in answering questions and resolving problems. The committee consists of Wendy Hysko (Brownell Library), Chris Kirby (Ilsley Library), Kim Peine (Dorothy Alling Library), and Richard Pritsky (Carpenter Carse Library).

The VOKAL consortium is proud to be a contributing member of the Koha open source community. We have an excellent partnership with our support vendor Bywater Solutions, who has been very flexible in accommodating our unique needs that stem from our running the first statewide consortium in a rural state. It continues to be a rewarding cooperative experience to connect libraries through open-source technology and to share experience and knowledge throughout Vermont and beyond in the Koha community.

GMLC- Listen UP VT spending 2020-2021

Total Budget: \$115,000.00

\$28,750.00 per quarter

Audio \$69,000.00- 60% of budget

eBooks \$46,000.00- 40% of budget

Budget divided up as follows:

	60%	40%	
	AUDIO	EBOOKS	TOTAL
20% Youth- Hannah	\$13,800.00	\$9,200.00	\$23,000.00
30% Adult Fic- Lisa M.	\$20,700.00	\$13,800.00	\$34,500.00
10% Non-fic- Loona/Hannah	\$6,900.00	\$4,600.00	\$11,500.00
10% Extra copies- Lisa	\$6,900.00	\$4,600.00	\$11,500.00
10% Expired Content- Hannah	\$6,900.00	\$4,600.00	\$11,500.00
20% Patron requests- Hannah	\$13,800.00	\$9,200.00	\$23,000.00
TOTAL	\$69,000.00	\$46,000.00	\$115,000.00

**Expenditures through 5/15/2021 [\$9,141.54 remaining to spend]
The remaining funds will be spent by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2021**

EXPENDITURES/ INITIAL BUDGET: VTLIB/IMLS						
VTLIB/ IMLS		ACTUAL EXPENDITURES			INITIAL BUDGET FOR VTLIB/IMLS: \$17,000.00	
		Audio	eBooks		AUDIO	EBOOKS
	Youth	\$2,407.38	\$995.55	\$3,402.93	\$2,040.00	\$1,360.00
	Fiction-	\$3,024.91	\$2,054.94	\$5,079.85	\$3,060.00	\$2,040.00
	Non-fiction	\$1,019.07	\$677.47	\$1,696.54	\$1,020.00	\$680.00
	Extra copies	\$2,054.05	\$1,334.89	\$3,388.94	\$2,040.00	\$1,360.00
	Patron requests	\$2,080.30	\$1,343.72	\$3,424.02	\$2,040.00	\$1,360.00
	Total:	\$10,585.71	\$6,406.57	\$16,992.28	\$10,200.00	\$6,800.00

Selector	AUDIO	EBOOKS	AMOUNT SPENT	BUDGET
20% Youth- Hannah	\$12,306.27	\$7,953.55	\$20,259.82	\$23,000.00
30% Adult Fic- Lisa M.	\$20,698.77	\$13,792.02	\$34,490.79	\$34,500.00
10% Non-fic- Loona/Hannah	\$6,135.69	\$4,632.30	\$10,767.99	\$11,500.00
10% Extra copies- Lisa	\$6,908.14	\$3,468.38	\$10,376.52	\$11,500.00
10% Expired Content- Hannah	\$6,683.49	\$4,276.31	\$10,959.80	\$11,500.00
20% Patron requests- Hannah	\$11,021.24	\$7,982.30	\$19,003.54	\$23,000.00
	\$63,753.60	\$42,106.84	\$105,858.46	\$115,000.00

ADDITIONAL MONIES

VTLIB GRANT: \$17,000/GMLC MATCH \$3,000. Funds spent by July 17, 2020

VTLIB GRANT/ GMLC MATCH (cont.)

# of COPIES PURCHASED BY CATEGORY						
	YOUTH	ADULT FICTION	ADULT NON-FICTION	EXTRA COPIES	REQUESTS	
IMLS/VTLIB						
# OF AUDIOBOOKS	41	51	16	39	29	176
# OF EBOOKS	37	58	19	38	41	193
						369 total copies
GMLC MATCH						
# OF AUDIOBOOKS	7	9	3	5	5	29
# OF EBOOKS	9	14	6	5	8	42
						71 total copies
GRAND TOTAL # OF COPIES By category	94	132	44	87	83	440

EXPENDITURES/ INITIAL BUDGET: GMLC MATCH						
GMLC MATCH		ACTUAL EXPENDITURES			INITIAL BUDGET FOR GMLC MATCH: \$3,000.00	
		Audio	eBooks		AUDIO	EBOOKS
	Youth	\$414.89	\$191.40	\$606.29	\$360.00	\$240.00
	Fiction	\$508.20	\$399.42	\$907.62	\$540.00	\$360.00
	Non-fiction	\$183.97	\$123.21	\$307.18	\$180.00	\$120.00
	Extra copies	\$344.96	\$245.97	\$590.93	\$360.00	\$240.00
	Patron requests	\$344.45	\$244.26	\$588.71	\$360.00	\$240.00
	Total:	\$1,796.47	\$1,204.26	\$3,000.73	\$1,800.00	\$1,200.00

**SAMARA GRANT FROM Vermont Community Foundation:
2,000.00 with GMLC MATCH of \$500.00
DATE SPENT: August 14, 2020**

VHC Audio \$	# of titles	# of copies
\$1153.27	19	20
VHC eBooks \$		
\$846.77	29	30
TOTAL: \$2,000.04	48	50
GMLC Audio \$	# of titles	# of copies
\$379.47		6
GMLC eBooks \$		
\$119.99		3
TOTAL: \$499.46		9
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,499.50	59

**CARES GRANT: \$1,500.00
DATE SPENT: December 10, 2020**

Audio \$	# of titles	# of copies
\$711.90	8	11
eBooks \$		
\$783.18	15	17
Total \$1,495.08	23	28

**Vermont Humanities Council \$750.00 for additional copies of
VT Reads 2021: *We Contain Multitudes* by Sarah Henstra
5 Ebook copies, 8 audiobook copies**

VHC VT Reads APRIL 2021	AUDIO	eBOOKS	SPENT
	\$520.00	\$225.00	\$745.00

ADDITIONAL MONEY TO SPEND

Supermarket Round-up: \$7482.92

GMLC was included in a collection of supermarkets "round-up" fundraiser from January - March 2021. This money will be spent in the next few weeks and will be used exclusively on titles with high holds ratios.

Total Number of Copies Purchased from July 2020- May 15, 2021

	# OF AUDIO	# OF EBOOKS	TOTAL
REGULAR BUDGET of \$115,000.00	1690	1346	3036*

*Please note that the number of copies may seem higher this year due to the "MA: 100 checkouts (concurrent users)" lending model. This model allows 100 users to listen at the same time and therefore counts as 100 copies in the report.

Total Number of Copies with Extra Monies

	# OF AUDIO	# OF EBOOKS	TOTAL
IMLS/VTLIB GRANT	176	193	369
GMLC Match to above	29	42	71
CARES Grant	11	17	28
VHC Money for VT Reads	8	5	13
VT Community Foundation SAMARA GRANT	20	30	50
GMLC Match to above	6	3	9
GRAND TOTAL:	250	290	540

REPORTS FROM SELECTORS

Lisa Milchman

ADULT FICTION & EXTRA COPIES OF HIGH DEMAND TITLES

When writing my selector's report last year, I really would not have imagined writing a pandemic related report for the second year. It has been a challenging year to be a selector, as the demand for digital content has exploded. It is hard to keep up.

As someone, who takes seriously the responsibility for providing e-books and e-audio to the patrons of the Vermont using this service, is often disheartening to see demand far outstrip what we have the budget to supply. Holds and hold wait times continue to rise. As I write this, the current average wait period is 69 days.

More so than in other years, I have focused my buying on bestsellers and much of my selecting has been driven by systemwide patron requests. I have had less of an ability to buy titles which

may fly under the radar but are worthy for collection based upon reviews or their selection to award or other important lists. To the extent possible within this constraint, I choose diverse titles. This has been more possible to do for e-books, which are often less costly, than for audiobooks.

Decision-making in selecting/purchasing continues to become more complicated as there is an increasing breadth of licensing options and models. Some of these models work in a selector's favor – giving us the ability to get more copies to the “shelves” in a cost-effective way; some models do not. It is also difficult to maintain a permanent collection when so many publishers work on a metered model, either by time or copy. To consider buying a permanent copy is often cost-prohibitive. For better or worse, this leads to a collection which focuses on the new and popular. That is not necessarily undesirable but leads to having a collection with significant holes. Patrons cannot explore older titles, especially when those authors have new works bringing them to someone's attention, or in the cases of series; and unlike in the physical world, cannot ILL these missing items. Many recommendations for older titles do not get selected. Even within these constraints and frustrations, I continue to enjoy being the GMLC Overdrive Fiction Selector and I am always happy to hear from colleagues for your suggestions, comments and questions. You can reach me at lisa.milchman@norwichlibrary.org

Loona Brogan, NON-FICTION

It's a joy to select Adult Nonfiction for GMLC. A series of unfortunate miscommunications delayed my continued service, but I am back in the system and happy to continue! This year, my choices were driven by patron demand, paired with consideration of popularity (based on subject currency, reviews and similar requests). I leaned more heavily on bestselling narrative-based nonfiction, memoirs and biographies for audiobook selections.

Hannah Peacock- YOUTH, REQUESTS, NON-FICTION (part of year)

The additional funds we received this year were so welcome, and so necessary! Even with almost \$25,000.00 extra, we are not quite meeting the high patron demand for digital content, but I strongly believe we are still offering a valuable and essential service during this very difficult time. The money we have is decent, the demand is simply overwhelming.

To add to Lisa Milchman's comments about lending models, they are a blessing and a curse. It is wonderful to be able to purchase a copy or 2 of a popular title that will naturally expire at the end of its lending life (24 months, 12 months, 100 checkouts, etc.) once the initial interest has died down. The “problem” this year is that interest is not dying down.

Expired titles need to be rebought regularly and the number of holds left on them is astronomical. We used to be able to guarantee that an expired title with 5+ holds would be repurchased. Now I am seeing expired titles with 20+ holds that we struggle to find money to repurchase.

This year my buying philosophy shifted to constantly reducing holds ratios, reordering expired titles with high numbers of holds and buying new titles that have received multiple requests from patrons, along with titles that are sure to be popular and/or fill a need in our political and social climate.

There is little extra money to find a title that “might” be interesting. We really have to focus on patron requests and proven interest. We are not able to offer a reasonable wait time on many

titles right now, and that is just the way it is this year. This may change over the next year, but from the feedback I have received from many patrons at my library, discovering Libby has been one of their most important relationships they have nurtured this year!

I am seeing that more and more libraries are using Advantage in the way it was intended. As an example, 2 of our most popular titles right now are “Four Winds” by Kristin Hannah and “A Promised Land” by Barack Obama. The eBook of “Four Winds” has seen 237 checkouts and has a holds ratio of 21.67. The Consortium owns 11 copies, while Advantage libraries own 24 copies. The holds ratio for Advantage libraries is only 5.69. Only 1 library is sharing their Advantage copy with the Consortium. The audio copy of President Obama’s book has been checked out 377 times. We own 15 copies, but there are 252 holds, 40 of which are suspended. Advantage libraries own 25 copies, but not one library is sharing with the group. The holds ratio is under 5 for those Advantage libraries. It might be time to not only continue pushing Advantage, but also to suggest the sharing of copies once the interest at a particular library has died down.

Youth books continue not to receive as many holds as do new or timely adult titles, but that is simply the nature of that category of patron. They will grab available titles but will not often bother to ask us to order them. Looking at the new Golden Dome Book Award List (formerly Dorothy Canfield Fisher) it is clear that the youth collection is very popular. All these titles are checked out, all have holds and this collection was only curated in April.

The extra money for additional copies is therefore almost exclusively used to purchase content for the adult collection.

Loona Brogan took a break from selecting for part of this year and I did some quick non-fiction orders to keep us caught up in that area. Loona is now selecting non-fiction for us again and it is great to have her back on board.

Hannah Peacock- EXPIRED METERED CONTENT/HIGH HOLDS

This category of purchasing, has become exclusively about reducing high holds and less about reordering expired titles that have a few lingering holds left on them. To repurchase an expired title, it usually must have 10+ holds left on it.

This budget (10%) is spent quickly and does not reduce the holds significantly at this point.

The weeding plan remains as before:

Automatic weeding plan summary

Your plan will automatically weed titles that meet the selected criteria:

- Titles are expired under any Metered Access lending model
- Titles are no longer available for sale
- Titles have no active holds

GMLC Board and Staff Contact Information

The GMLC Board gmlc-board@googlegroups.com

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