

We are pleased to announce that effective Monday, January 31, the Library will resume in-person patron services. Stay as long as you like, reserve a study room, take in the Hudson River sunset from a reading chair, browse those books on archeology ... we're back!

We also return to some in-person children's programming (see below), with more to come. Adult programs will be on Zoom for the near future, but do check the calendar for updates. (Computer use is limited to one hour, once a day.) And, beginning on February 6, the Library will open on Sundays, from 1 to 5 p.m.

As you explore the stacks, you might come across our new Youth Services Librarian, Allee Manning. "It's been a long wait, but it's well worth it," says Library Director Debbie Quinn. "She's tech-savvy, book-savvy, and has lots of programming ideas. We are so excited to have her here!"

A native of Pelham, a graduate of SUNY Purchase, and a former reference librarian at Tarrytown's Warner Library, Allee feels right at home in Hastings. With her background in journalism — including work with TIME for Kids magazine — and with more recent experience as a middle school librarian at Brooklyn's Berkeley-Carroll School and a teen services librarian at the Dobbs Ferry Public Library, Allee is an advocate for "young people and the opportunities and resources they specifically want. Young people deserve to have their voices heard," she says.

She is particularly interested in making the Library welcoming and accessible for all, including for patrons with low vision, dyslexia, or learning differences, and she looks to curate resources that represent and reflect our vibrant and diverse community. "There are different forms of literacy," she adds. "I want to support all young people through the Library, not only those who are already passionate about reading."

Allee's programming is already on the calendar. On February 14 she begins a Storytime for toddlers ages 1-3 that will meet on Mondays from 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m. She will also resume the "Stories That Speak" series, which began in 2020, by sharing picture books containing themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The first reading, set for Thursday, February 17, features "The Day You Begin," by Jacqueline Woodson. This series, geared toward children 3-5, will run Thursdays from 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

As we warm into spring, Allee is considering "Storywalks," which might meet on the Old Croton Aqueduct trail and feature storytelling and readings inspired by the natural environment. Doubtless, there will be events on the Library lawn. "I love to bring things outside," she says. She also has ideas for "intergenerational programming," inviting the senior community to share in events with our younger patrons, and a book club for middle schoolers exploring themes of identity. "The benefit to being in a small community," she notes, "is that we can provide something for everyone." Above all, Allee wants to know your suggestions — and plans to ready a shoebox for you to drop them in!

Allee has already hit the streets of Hastings, talking with local merchants and school personnel about programming ideas and sponsoring prizes for summer reading programs she's devising. You might even see her out on her scooter on Library Sign Up Day, signing up residents for library cards. But perhaps you'll just stop by the children's desk to say hi. She'd love to meet you.