

Portland Public Library: Where Community Thrives

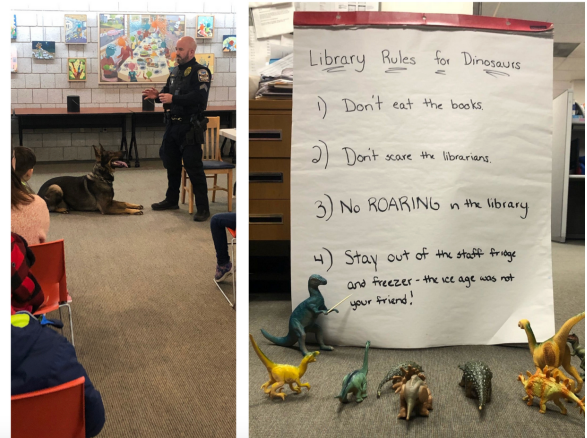


Located in downtown Portland, Connecticut, the Portland Public Library is a small but well-loved library that holds a special place in the hearts of its patrons, thanks to its creative programming, welcoming atmosphere, and dedicated staff.

In 1895, the town of Portland voted to establish a Public Library, with an appropriation not to exceed \$300 for the fitting of a room in the new Town Hall. It opened on Saturday, May 4, 1895 with 800 volumes and 77 subscribers.

In 1977, the Portland Board of Selectmen formed a committee to study the needs of the town and it became clear that a new library was a priority. On August 18, 1980, the formal groundbreaking took place for the Portland Public Library, which would be completed in December of 1981. The contents of the old library were moved to the new building by enthusiastic volunteers and the men of Co. C, 1st Battalion, 169th Infantry of the Connecticut National Guard, who moved 60,000 books and equipment in approximately four hours and on Monday, January 25, 1982 the Portland Library opened to the public in the location where it currently stands at 20 Freestone Avenue.

Over the years, the library has continued to evolve, adapting to the changing needs of the community. A beautiful renovation in the summer of 2020 has brought the library's interior up-to-date and ensures accessibility for all library patrons. Today, the Portland Library houses an extensive collection of materials and is a dynamic community hub, offering a wide variety of programs and services that celebrate and encourage lifelong learning.



The Portland Library is best known in the region for its creative children’s programming. The library hosts engaging storytimes, visiting performers, and art and science programs that make learning fun. With themed summer and winter reading programs that engage hundreds of youth each year, a sweet play area, a variety of board games to check out, and a beautiful collection of picture books, the library is a popular gathering place and a cherished resource for local families.

Adult offerings include book clubs, afternoon movies, lectures by local experts, tech support, and rotating shows featuring the work of local artists. The library actively partners with Portland’s many community organizations and town departments to ensure a breadth of programming that meets the interests and needs of its diverse users. One of the library’s most exciting recent additions is its Seed Library. This innovative initiative encourages patrons to “borrow” seeds to grow their own fruits, vegetables, and flowers.

But the #1 reason that the Portland Library is so beloved by the community is without a doubt its staff. The library is lucky to have a team of dedicated and friendly professionals who go above and beyond to ensure every visitor feels welcome. They greet patrons warmly, usually by name, and are always ready to assist with an inquiry or a personalized book recommendation.

The Portland Library is a shining example of the value and power of local institutions that foster learning, creativity, connection, and community.

