

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WINTHROP PUBLIC LIBRARY AND MUSEUM
MEETING MINUTES: MAY 8, 2025

In Attendance:

In Person

Trustees: Gillian Teixeira, Alyson Dewar, Gary Skomro, Anne Ferreira,
Library Director - Greg McClay; Executive Assistant - Alana Locke

Absent:

Trustee Marie Matarazzo

Call to order:

Meeting called to order at 5:32pm

Minutes:

Minutes from April submitted for approval

- Motion by Anne Ferreira
- Seconded by Betty Peabody
- No discussion
- All in attendance voted in favor
- Motion passed

Chair Report:

The chair, Trustee Teixeira, called attention to the fact that the Board has three seats expiring at the end of this calendar year and there will be three spots on the November ballot. If those of you whose terms are ending are planning on running again, pull your papers early and get your signatures. Doing so early is better than waiting. I would like to be sure that all of the seats are filled through election rather than appointment due to vacancy.

If you are not interested in running for re-election, that is fine. I would like to have a chat in private about your reasons for not doing so.

Trustee Skomro mentioned that two different people have approached him about their running for Trustee. He also brought up that officer terms are for two years while Board terms are for four. This means there will need to be an election of officers at the beginning of the first meeting of the new Board. At the beginning of the new term and at the first meeting in January after new and/or re-elected members have been sworn in, a vote must be held to elect a Chair for the new term. At that first meeting, the longest serving member of the Board shall serve as temporary chair and conduct the election of the chairperson for the coming session. If two Board members have equal terms of service it goes to the older of the two.

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Once a chairperson is elected, the new Board Chair assumes their duties (including the election of a Vice Chairperson)

Director's Report:

ADA Update:

Work on the exterior access ramp (from the parking lot to the children's room) is scheduled to begin shortly. Initially it was thought that it would begin either today (Thursday, May 8) or tomorrow (Friday, May 9) but an email from Rich Cifuni stated that equipment would be staged on Friday and work should commence on Monday, after the rain forecasted for the weekend. Work will begin at the top (entrance to the children's room) and move down towards the parking lot. On days when the door to the children's room is fully obstructed, that space will not be open to the public for the day, as it will lack the required two forms of egress. This should only be a few days total. If the door is able to be opened, the children's room will also be open but that door will be an emergency exit only.

Trustee Teixeira: Will patrons be able to request books from the Children's room when it is closed?

Director McClay: Yes. And we will have a selection of titles available on the main floor as well

Trustee Dewar: The children's room will be staffed but not open?

Director McClay: correct

Trustee Teixeira: And no one will lose work hours?

Director McClay: correct.

Based on the bid for this work, we should have enough of the grant remaining to install the lift from the back entrance to the Hazlett Room. Bids for that job will open on May 15 and go until May 28. All work needs to be completed by June 30 for us to be able to use the grant funds. I gave a heads up to Mobility 101, who supplied the original quote, about the upcoming bid process. As far as I am aware, they are the only option to do the work. If there are no bids, we may be able to hire them directly.

Installing the lift will leave no funds remaining for any necessary elevator work. However, if we do not receive bids for the lift or if the lift cannot be completed in time, we will attempt to use the funds towards elevator repair/maintenance instead.

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget update:

The library budget for Fiscal Year 2026 was submitted a while back. The Town Manager has indicated his approval, pending the union contract negotiations that should be finished soon. Negotiations are between the union and the Town Manager and not the purview of the Library Director. I have had no reports on the status.

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We have nearly run through our 2025 budget. Our spending is not usually this close to budget at this time of the year. It is due to a combination of a new online service as well as the large purchase of print books we made in December.

Playmakers Donation:

The library was given a donation of two photo albums/scrapbooks featuring the Winthrop Playmakers from the late 1960s and early 1970s. We submitted a press release to the Winthrop Transcript; it was published today. The albums will be available for viewing at the main desk for the next few months. We will place them in the museum after that. They contain photos and newspaper articles. The newspaper articles are available online through the Transcript. We will attempt to scan some of the material. Everyone I have mentioned this to remembers the Playmakers fondly. I look forward to seeing how many patrons come to view them.

Aspen Discovery System:

NOBLE member libraries voted in January to move to the Aspen Discovery System. It will replace the NOBLE public catalog that provides patron access to NOBLE collections. The staff will continue to use the Evergreen Staff catalog. Three other Massachusetts networks (CW, MARS, CLAMS) have already implemented Aspen. The new system should provide a more modern and dynamic entry point to our collections. The search is expected to be speedy and it has tools to better allow libraries to highlight their collections. It seems to have some nice bells and whistles and should be more visually appealing. Staff members have each signed up for a two-hour intro to Aspen that are offered at various times this week and next.

Trustee Ferreira: Should we schedule an intro to Aspen for the patrons? Are there any new features worth highlighting?

Director McClay: I would like to see what questions arise after it goes live and prepare something if and when we have a list of those rather than try to anticipate them. Basic search should stay very similar. Evidently the language can be changed easily. That is likely to be an issue with someone unintentionally doing so and not knowing how to change it back.

I will ask the staff post-training if they have ideas for areas that might be worth highlighting to patrons. It should go live in the next few months. Every time we make a change like this the software is advertised as being "very intuitive" with varying degrees of truth in that statement.

Trustee Teixeira: I hope it's jazzier

Exec. Asst. Locke: It appears to be sleeker and fancier.

Google Review:

Occasionally the director receives a notification of a review of the library on Google. This most recent one read: "my first time here yesterday! very cute. So many books to choose from! very diverse picks :) i found a selection of Spanish books on the second level! ;)"

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Summer:

Removing a lot of junk and furniture from the Good room (the Good room in the hall with the bathrooms and across the hall from them) was a positive that was made easier by the junk removal company. This summer I would like to clear out more junk from the processing room in the basement and lay the groundwork for converting it to study room space and a maker space. I am requesting \$1,000.00 from State Aid to be earmarked for that.

Trustee Teixeira: is that enough?

Director McClay: I don't know. The recent furniture/junk removal came in at \$600. This one contains shelving that they may dismantle (or we may have to do so, I need to double check on that) and the hauling company doing that is likely to make it more expensive than the previous work.

Trustee Teixeira: I have a suggestion. We are coming up on summer, where we do not traditionally meet (but absolutely will if we have to). I suggest we allocate \$1500 for the project to give a cushion and lessen the possibility of needing an emergency meeting to allocate more funds. The money would be for cleaning out the rooms and if there are additional funds once that is complete, they can be used to begin the remodel. We will then revisit it in September. It will be great to use that space.

Director McClay: we do not need to store junk.

Trustee Teixeira: I make a motion to allocate \$1500.00 from State Aid for preparing the processing room to be study and maker space. Preparing shall include junk removal and cleaning as well as any beginnings of partitioning of the space as there are remaining funds for.

Trustee Skomro; second

All present voted in favor; motion passed. \$1500.00 from State Aid will be allocated to the cleaning out of the processing room in the basement of the library with any remaining funds being used to begin the work to convert the space.

Agenda Items:

Decertified Libraries

The Winthrop Public Library and Museum does not currently have a policy regarding the borrowing abilities for members of communities that have libraries that have been de-certified by the State. As a participant in the certification process and the State Aid program, Winthrop welcomes all community members and patrons of all the other libraries that also participate in the program. The State encourages extending these privileges only to certified libraries but leaves it up to individual libraries to decide their own policies.

Participating in the certification process requires that libraries allocate a proportional amount of town budgetary monies towards libraries and that any increase and cuts are in line with those of other departments. (If the library is the only department to receive budget cuts, while other departments do not, or

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receive disproportionate cuts in relation to other departments, they become ineligible). Libraries are also required to maintain a certain number of operating hours and spend a certain proportion of their total budget on materials.

In addition to no longer being eligible for State Aid, decertified libraries are no longer allowed to participate in the Inter-Library Loan program in the State. There is a waiver process to maintain certification during extenuating circumstances, though there are circumstances that can make libraries/towns ineligible for waivers.

If a town decides to continue lending to residents of a town without a library or with one that is de-certified, it disincentivizes that town from maintaining or funding their library. It also places an unfair burden on the tax payers of the town that extends privileges to those residents, since they are now subsidizing the needs of the other town.

A discussion ensued with the main points being:

- If someone wants a book, we want to let them have that book.
- However, we do not want to encourage cities and towns to let their libraries go because a nearby municipality is picking up the slack. A mutually beneficial relationship only works if all are participating similarly and proportionally. It no longer exists if they opt-out and rely on everyone else who has opted in.
- Winthrop just faced a similar dilemma with our override, which passed. If it had not, the library would have had to cut services. However, it is likely that those cuts would have been proportional to other departments and we would have been eligible for a waiver. Winthrop has received waivers in the past.
- Currently Stoneham is the only town we know of considering drastic cuts to their library but in this current climate, others may follow.
- The State would prefer that towns fund and maintain libraries. And it's important that people fight for their libraries. This is less likely if they can utilize all the services of a library nearby.
- Some towns may extend full library privileges through a fee system for a card. Some towns currently do this for out-of-state patrons where a set fee allows a person a library card for a year. A similar system could exist for residents of towns with de-certified libraries.
- Anyone can utilize our library in person. They can make use of our space and use our physical resources while in house. They are not allowed to remove any materials. That would not change.
- All members were in favor of following state guidelines and not extending lending privileges to members of communities with de-certified libraries. Director McClay will draft a policy and distribute it to the Trustees before the next meeting, where there will be a vote. If a Trustee has input on the proposed policy, they will reply to the Director and the Chair only. Replying all could be construed as a violation of the State Open Meeting law. Board-wide discussion will resume at the next meeting.

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Circulation Numbers:

The Trustees received circulation numbers for The Winthrop Public Library and Museum and NOBLE covering November 2024 through April 2025. The trustees received the numbers for Total Circulation, Checkouts, Holds Filled, Web Renewals, Auto Renewals, and Staff Renewals. Total circulation includes renewals. Checkouts does not include renewals. (see Attached)

Trustee Teixeira suggested the circulation numbers be presented quarterly (at a minimum) and include the current year as well as the previous year. Doing so makes it easier to spot trends.

Trustees received the door counter numbers from March 10 - end of April. The slowest day showed 95 patrons (second Saturday of school vacation week). The busiest day showed 314 patrons. The busiest days in the period were Wednesdays (half days for the schools during the period).

Patron numbers (active library cards) for Winthrop and NOBLE were also given. Winthrop averages around 1000 active patrons per month with about 6,000 patrons total. Winthrop Public Library cards automatically expire and can be renewed online or in person. Sometimes patron cards lapse between expiration and renewal because patrons don't utilize the library during that period and do not know they have an expired card until they resume.

Disability Commission Grant

See above: ADA

New Items:

Trustee Ferreira mentioned that Summer Reading generally sees a lot of new library cards issued. She wonders if the library should do more outreach to potential patrons? She suggested maybe having a table at the Farmer's Market in the summer.

Director McClay: I attended the Health Fair at the Senior Center. The Children's Librarians try to attend back to school night at the Arthur T Cummings school, at least, since they are across the street and many of the students come to the library after school. The Children's Librarians are also planning to attend at least one Farmer's Market.

Trustee Dewar asked about how to connect people interested in offering programming or who have a skillset that could be a program connected to the library. She has an artist friend who would love to do art classes for people. Trustee Ferreira also has a yoga teacher who is interested in holding classes at the library. Email Exec Asst. Alana Locke, locke@noblenet.org, if you have a programming idea or know someone interested in hosting a program with the library.

Meeting Schedule:

The next meeting is:

- o June 12, 2025 at 5:30pm

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Other Items for Discussion

No additional items

Public Comment:

- No public comment

Adjournment:

- Motion to adjourn by Anne Ferreira
- Seconded by Alyson Dewar
- All voted in favor
- Meeting adjourned at 6:32pm

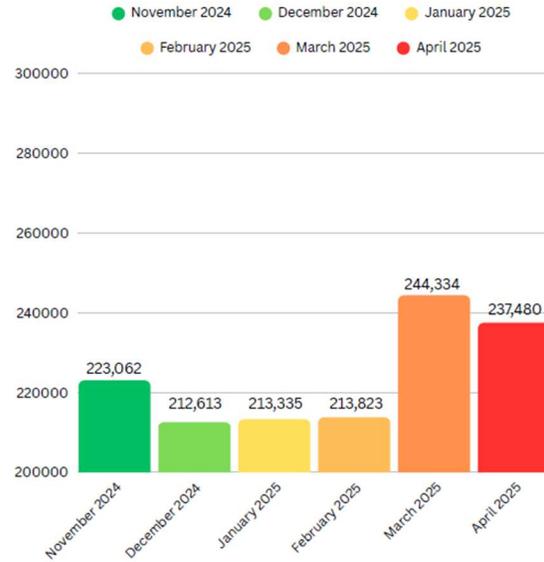
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Total Circulation

November 2024 - April 2025



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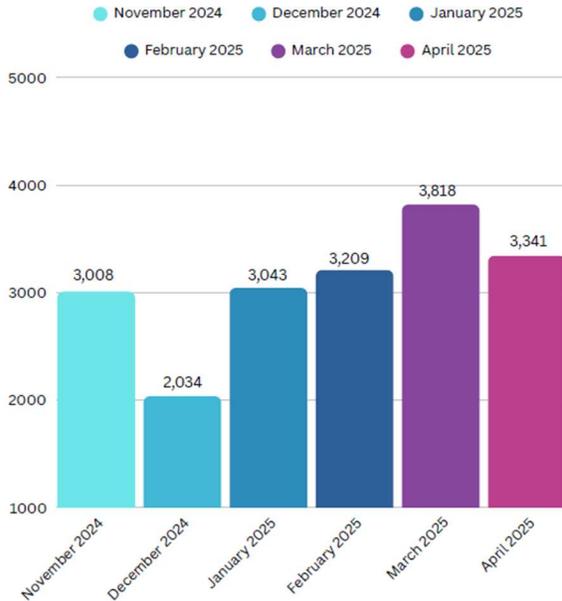


NOBLE

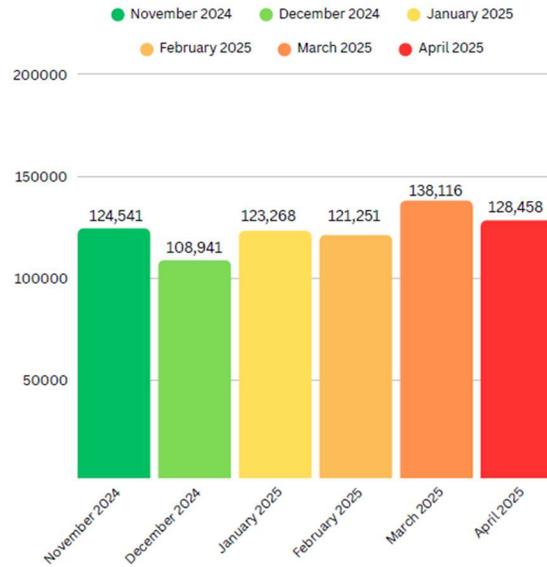
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Checkouts

November 2024 - April 2025



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NOBLE

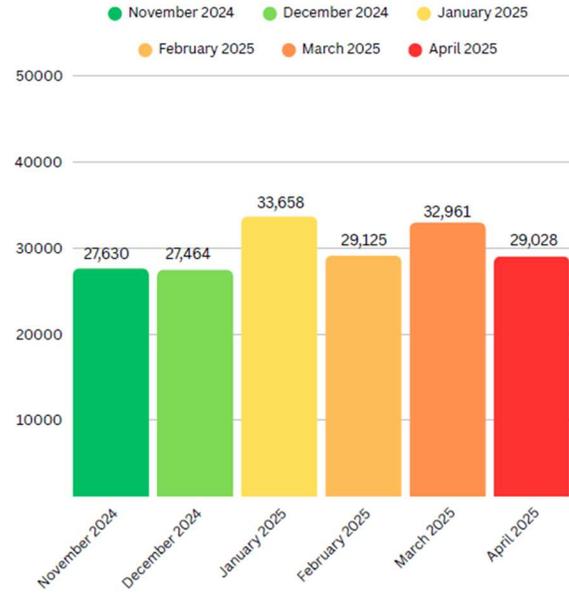
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Holds Filled

November 2024 - April 2025



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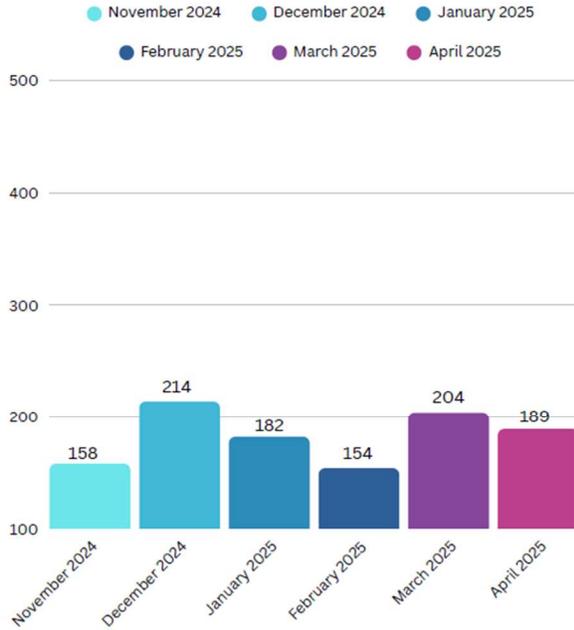


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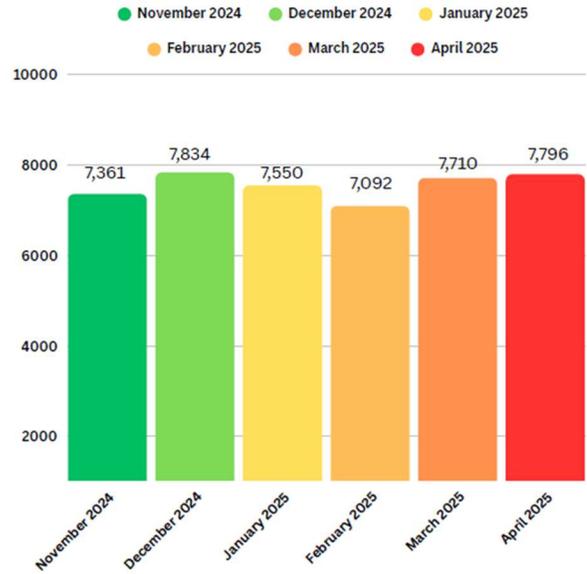
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Web Renewals

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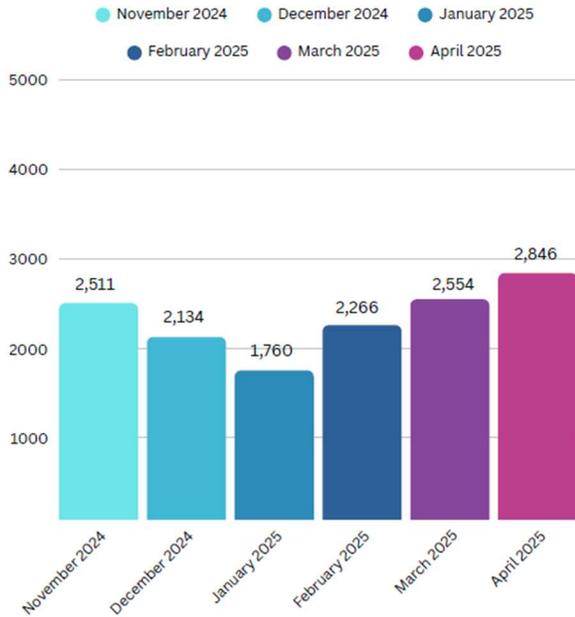


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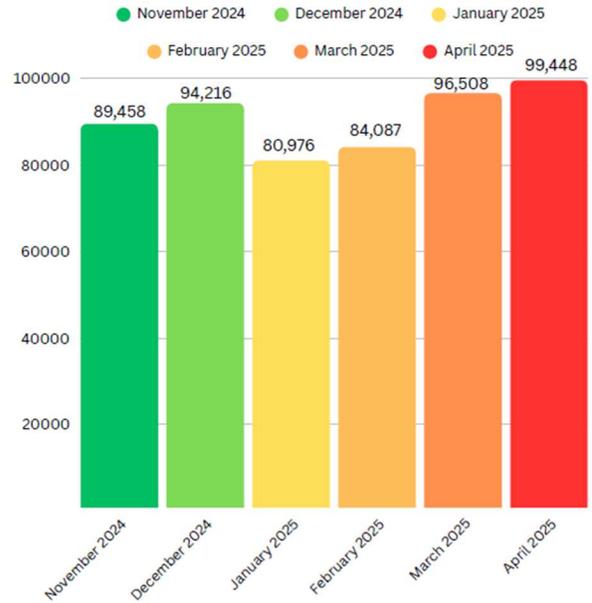
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Auto Renewals

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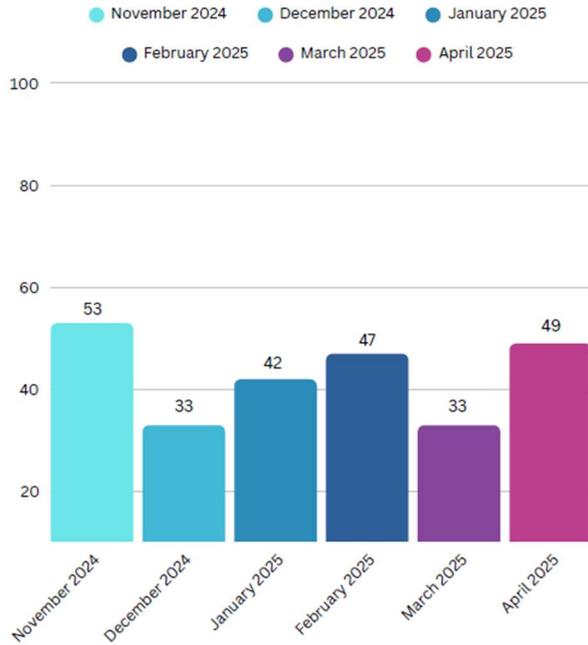


NOBLE

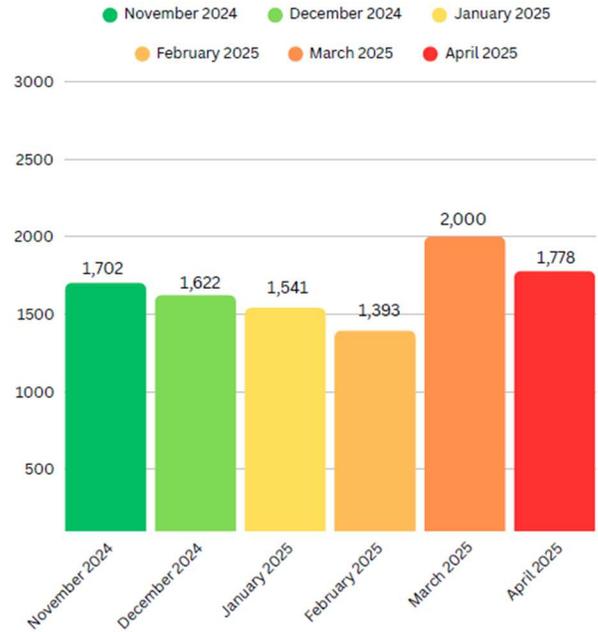
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Staff Renewals

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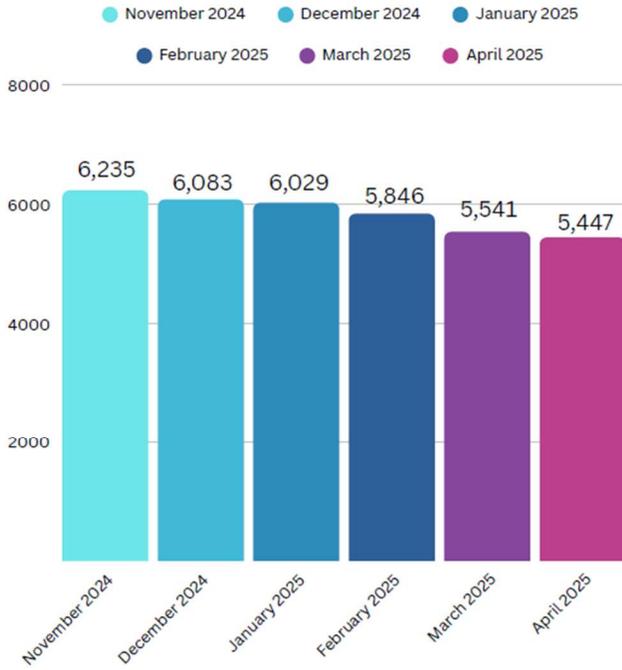


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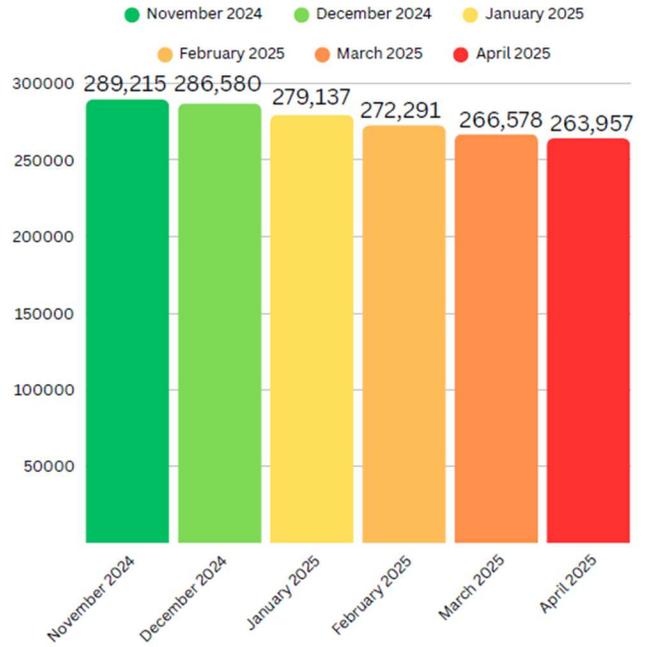
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Total Patrons

November 2024 - April 2025



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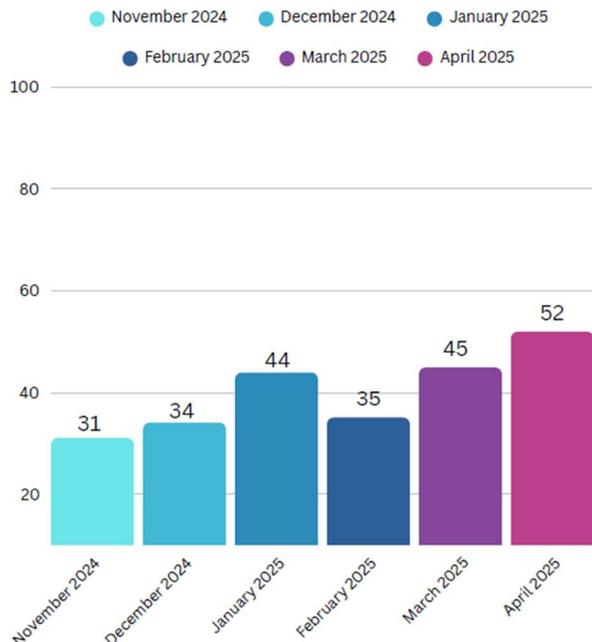


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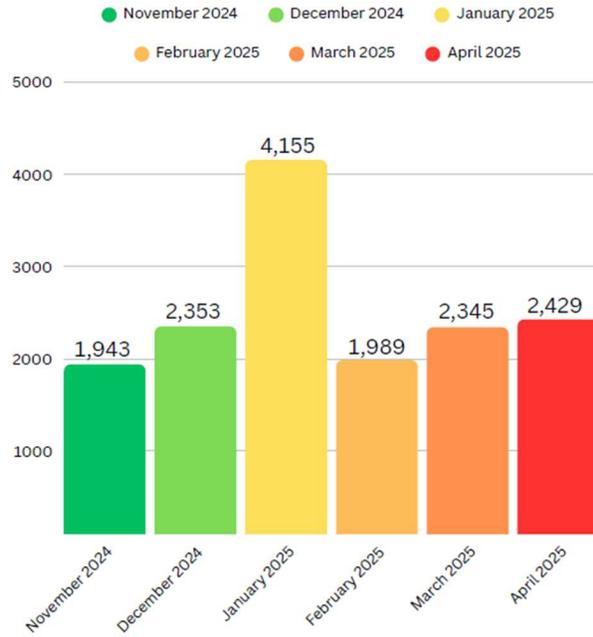
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Patrons Added

November 2024 - April 2025



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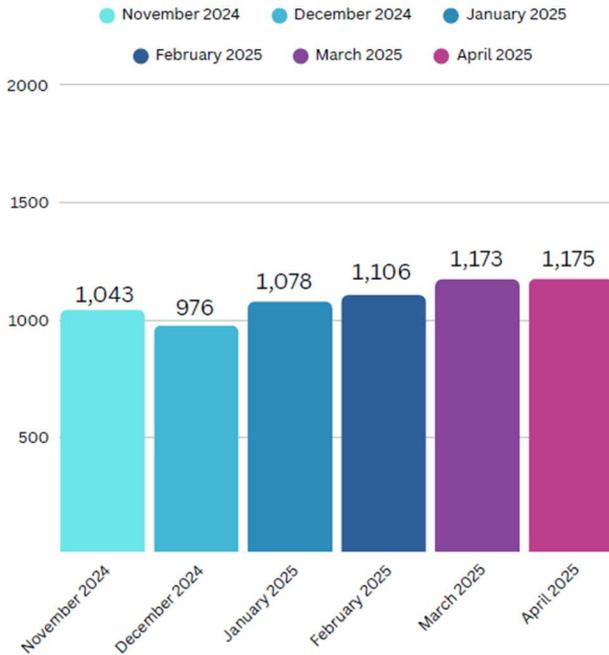
NOBLE

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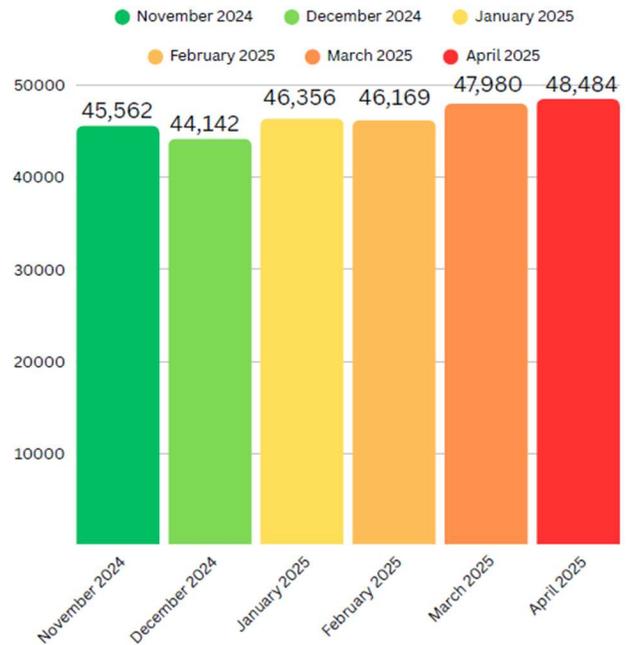
Active Patrons

November 2024 - April 2025

Active Patrons are your patrons who checked out, placed holds, logged into the catalog, or authenticated via SIP2 this month.



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NOBLE