Library Report
March 2012
Circulation: 10,288
New Patrons: 54
Reference Questions: 152
Special Requests: 44
Computer Sign-ins: 889
Downloads: 428
Cataloging: 403 (319 purchases/84 donations)
Cataloging edits: 432
Meeting Room Usage: 40 / Study Room Usage: 30
Bills for unreturned materials: 19

Patrons can now put their library barcode on their smartphones and we will scan it just as we would their library card. When a patron offered us his phone to scan a couple of months ago it was a first for us. Looking into it we found numerous public libraries already accepting barcodes on smartphones. We read up on it making sure there were no serious issues attached to this service and have added it to our customer service initiatives. Patrons download the free Cardstar app onto their smartphone and enter/scan in their library number. We will scan it and ask the patron to verify their name and off they go. No forgetting your library card anymore—if you also have it on your phone.

I attended a program at the Scarborough Public Library on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in libraries. RFID is system of tagging library items for the purposes of security, self-check out, circulation management, and inventory. The various components of RFID have been instituted in hundreds of libraries over the last decade. Scarborough, Portland, Auburn and Camden Public Library have purchased the 3M products to increase productivity, improve customer service, decrease work injury related to tedious and repetitive motion, ease of inventory control and to curb theft. Local area librarians that attended received a tour of the Scarborough Library’s new RFID features as well as a presentation by 3M’s Library RFID representative.

I came away floored by what gains could be had by these products.

A day after the RFID meeting Barbara got a call from library studies student, Kristin, who she has helped with various projects and papers. Kristin had an assignment to develop a technology plan for a library and offered up various ideas including RFID. We met and she is developing a RFID proposal for our library that would be a phased in project over three years. It is a serious proposal with real costs and is ours to do with what we like. We will see where this leads.
The Civil War “Let’s Talk About It” program has remained popular with a good crowd attending every month. The exhibit case holds Wizard of Oz memorabilia and on our walls is a photography display by Emily Keef.

At the Maine Library Commission meeting of which I am a member we discussed at length the future of the state library consortium. A sub-committee was formed to keep abreast of the on-going talks with Maine InfoNet and the Library of Congress’s WorldCat Local to get all Maine library catalogs on a statewide system in the near future.

Reference question of the month: “I don’t have access to a computer at the moment and am unable to come to the library. Can you check out a particular wedding planner site on the internet for me?”

While on the phone the reference librarian answered questions about the wedding planner site and offered her opinion of the site and the services.