

During the Year's Coldest Weeks, Children's Activities Heat Up at The Malden Public Library

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Special to The Advocate

Stories, crafts, music – and even animals – provided fun learning activities for Malden kids during the month of January at the Malden Public Library (MPL). Parents and caregivers took advantage of free programs that included a live animal show, crafting, story time, music sessions and other events specifically for children.

One of the more popular kids' events this month was the Library's Curious Creatures live animal show that was held on January 12, where 44 children interacted with mammals and reptiles, including an alligator, a chinchilla, and a Burmese python snake. The children were mesmerized, especially as they got to observe the creatures up close and learn about their habits, diets, sleep schedules and more.

Creative Crafting for Kids

The Library offered several hands-on opportunities for children to get creative, with a variety of special crafting events during the month. Among them, the Kids' Kindness Rock Painting event blended compassion and creativity. Eager young artists painted images and words of affirmation, encouragement and positivity on rocks. They were encouraged to hide their finished masterpieces around the city so when people found these festively painted rocks, it would brighten their day. Children were also able to bring their rocks home, or give them as gifts.

At another popular event, Fun with Felting, the Library's staff taught children how to make felted balls, creating colorful shapes using wool roving and soapy water (no needles). The finished felted balls could be used as cat toys, décor or collectibles.

Young participants also enjoyed getting their hands messy at the recent Fun with Modeling Clay event, where they sculpted glorious creations out of modeling clay.

Fostering a Love of Books & Literacy

Part of the Library's mission is to instill a love of reading and learning into even the youngest community members. In January (as in every other month), the Library offered pre-school story time, filled with picture books, songs, rhymes, and simple crafts in the Children's Room. For the youngest children, the Library hosted Song & Rhyme Time, a program that features songs, nursery rhymes, and simple picture books for a fun way to enrich infants' and young children's literacy.

As always, these events and programming were free and open to the public.

"We love hosting fun, creative, and educational events for the children in our community. These kids are so inquisitive and delighted to learn! It's our honor and privilege to foster their love of reading, curiosity and community here at the Library," said Malden Public Library Director Dora St. Martin. "Especially during the cold, dreary, seemingly endless days of January, parents and caretakers appreciate having fun, safe and free activities to enrich, educate and entertain their children."

Children's programming scheduled for February includes Valentine's cookie decorating, a family dance party, Lego club, sand art and origami. For more information about upcoming events, please visit the Events & Programs page of the Library's website: <https://maldenpubliclibrary.org/>.

As a private, non-profit corporation, the Library uses a trust – established by local entrepreneur and philanthropist Elisha Converse and his wife Mary Diana – to fund the building's maintenance, renovations, artwork, and books. The trust is overseen by nine local Trustees, who volunteer their time and efforts to fulfill the Converse family's wishes. Thanks to the generous trust fund – as well as donations from individuals, families, and private foundations – the Malden Public Library costs local taxpayers less while providing the same essential services. The Library is located at 36 Salem Street in Malden.