

# MIDDLETOWN LEADS

## WHAT IS MIDDLETOWN LEADS?

*Middletown Leads* is a weekly newsletter intended to connect the Middletown community by providing information about the civic undertakings of the Town.

## MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY – AN ACTIVITIES CENTER

Did you know that, in the same way that our world has become a digital world, libraries have evolved into community activities centers?

There is an old song entitled *The Best Things in Life Are Free*, which clearly describes the benefits of the Middletown Public Library.

## OPPORTUNITIES AT THE MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Did you know that 6,394 Middletown residents (population approx. 16,000) have active library cards, but the actual number of cardholders is 10,271 - which means that 3,877 non-residents also choose to use the services at the Middletown Public Library?

Of course, a patron can still visit the library to take out a hard-cover book - or even stop at the Friends of the Library Bookstore to buy a book on the cheap (proceeds supporting the library's programs.)

On the other hand, computers are now available on-site for the use of patrons, not to mention the Wi-Fi that is accessible even in the parking lot.

Did you know that eBooks and audio books can be downloaded from the library website?

Did you know that, from home, members can access movies as well as download music or even current magazines that are "keepers" as, for example, *National Geographics*, *Rolling Stone*, *Family Handyman*, *Kiplinger's*, *People*, *Highlights for Children*, *ESPN*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Smithsonian*, *Prevention*, *PC World*, and many more)?

Did you know that courses - both academic and cultural - are available through the Universal Class Online Learning Program in 30 subject areas, many of which offer continuing education units (CEUs).

More than 500 courses are available, and all are designed and led by professional instructors to build deeper understanding and mastery of subject matter. Universal Class includes videos, assignments, quizzes, tests, and options for social media interaction with other learners. Patrons may take multiple classes and learn at their own pace.

Did you know that patrons could learn to use another language in real-life learning situations through the Mango online learning system? Mango offers access to 60 foreign language courses and 17 English courses taught completely in the user's native language.

Did you know that members could borrow fishing poles and tackle? Or that creative members can take a class that teaches the use of the 3-D printer?

And, most recently, the library has acquired tablets that can be signed out by patrons over the age of 18. And speaking of printing, for a small fee, did you know that patrons can print documents – even from home to be picked up later.

## PROGRAMS AT THE MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Then, of course, there are the programs. In the Children’s Room, for example, there is Weekly Story Time, Children’s Crafts, Babytime Play group, and Saturday STEM Play Day, not to mention special programs scheduled during school vacations such as the Lunar Robotics RI Computer Museum.

## ACTIVITIES AT THE MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY

The multi-generational Chess Club has become very popular.

And for adults, the library provides in-season Tax Prep, programs entitled Financial Planning and College Bound Saver as well as unique offerings such as the American Music Program, the Lecture on Franco American History, and the upcoming Exhibit of Gravestone Rubbings (sponsored by the Middletown Historical Society.)

Now that it is Spring, one of the most engaging activities is the Community Garden, where members can be assigned a small plot for their own hands-on planting and harvesting.

## OUR TOWN

The most exciting current news related to the Middletown Public Library is that PBS is producing a program about Middletown and is currently in the process of development with interviews scheduled for May 4, 2019.

It plans to air the program on Wednesday, September 4, 2019.

## MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY IS ABOUT BOOKS AND SO MUCH MORE

The Middletown Public Library is a living and breathing organization, ever expanding, so that community members can access engaging opportunities at their leisure – days, evenings, and weekends as well.

So remember – the best things in life are free at the Middletown Public Library!

## FOOTNOTE

Editorial essays may appear occasionally at the following website: <http://middletownleads.blogspot.com/>