

# Bellingham Public Library

## Annual Report 2012

*"If we didn't already have libraries, they would now have to be invented.  
They are the keys to American success in fully exploiting  
the information superhighways of the future."*  
James Billington, Librarian of Congress

Honorable Selectmen:

Demand for services at the Bellingham Library continued to expand in 2012. We continue to strive to find new ways to meet our mission: "... to be an important resource for all members of the community in their search for knowledge, ideas, information and creative use of their leisure time." We strive to be a community pillar, a place that offers services to Bellingham residents of all ages.

In this document we will provide information about the library staff, collection, facility, affiliations, services and program activities in 2012.

We look forward to another successful year in 2013.

Bernadette Rivard  
*Library Director*  
Kenneth Hamwey  
*Chair, Board of Trustees*

*Board Members*  
Suzanne Garten  
Lisa Hanson  
Michael Carr  
Russell Lafond

### *At a glance...*

The Board of Trustees generally meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend.



**Bellingham  
Public Library  
Board of Trustees**

Ken Hamwey, Chair  
Sue Garten, Vice Chair  
Lisa Hanson, Secretary  
Michael Carr  
Russell Lafond

#### **Did you know?**

More people visit Massachusetts public libraries each year than attend entire seasons of the Red Sox, Patriots, Bruins and Celtics combined!

Massachusetts residents borrowed 58 million items from their libraries, about 110 per minute!

22,000 people per day use the Internet in Massachusetts libraries, not including WiFi sessions.!

**More than 1/2 of Bellingham residents have library cards.**

**Circulation of library material is up almost 2%, to 144,234 items in the calendar year.**

**Attendance was up 11% . Almost 100,000 (99,388) people visited the library in 2012, an average of 345 people per day.**

**E-book downloads doubled this year to an average of 155 titles per month.**

**Volunteers donated an average of over 100 hours per month in services to the library last year.**

**Internet use with our new computers has doubled to almost 1500 sessions per month!**

**Each month nearly 50 families received discounted admission to a variety of museums and attractions through our Discount Pass Program.**

**The library meeting rooms hosted 25% more functions than the previous year. The rooms are used nearly 100 times per month.**

**Average attendance at children's programs doubled in 2012. Over 1000 children and parents attend programs at the library each month.**

**Our Libraries for Job Seekers Programming tripled the attendance at adult programs.**

## Library Staff, Collection & Affiliations

### Staff



This past year our Young Adult Librarian Janet Gallagher resigned for a full time position at another library.

She was replaced by **Amanda Maclure**, a Bellingham resident and Bellingham High School Substitute Teacher. Amanda has been quite successful at revitalizing our After School Café program for middle and high school students.

**Attendance at this program is up 50% this year!**



As the year progressed we were finding it difficult to meet our part time scheduling needs, so we hired an additional part time library assistant, Bellingham resident **Patricia Honor** who works an average of 10 hours per week.

Total staff hours for the year were up a little over 5% to an average of about 300 staff hours per week. We are open to the public 50 hours per week.

The increase in staff hours was funded through state aid and our revolving fund.

### Collection

The size of the library collection has not changed significantly. On a continual basis we are adding new books, DVDs and other materials to the collection, as well as “weeding” titles that are outdated, damaged or no longer in demand. Research into the usage of library materials shows that a well-weeded collection sees increased usage as patrons are more easily able to locate relevant titles. This is especially important in sections of the collection that are rapidly changing such as technology and medicine.

### Affiliations

#### *Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)*

The MBLC is the state agency that certifies libraries meet standards in order to be eligible for state aid and LSTA federal grants. The standards include the number of hours the library is open, the education level of staff and funds spent on library materials.

Although our budget has increased, over the past few years, the 10.4% budget cut from 2009 has again prevented the library from meeting the MBLC’s Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR).

In the fall we completed our state aid and waiver application. All indications are that since the budget did have a small increase, the waiver should be granted.

#### *Massachusetts Library System (MLS)*

The library is a member of MLS, which provides access to online magazine, journal, newspaper and reference source materials that our patrons can access from home or in the library.

MLS also provides delivery service for interlibrary sharing of materials. Each day hundreds of items from the Bellingham Library are sent to and received from other libraries throughout the state.

MLS is the primary source of free continuing education for library staff. Library staff attends workshops, webinars and other training at libraries throughout the region with MLS trainers.

#### *Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (C/WMARS)*

C/W MARS is our library network. The annual dues we pay to the network funds our use of the shared library database for patron and item records. This database facilitates the sharing of library materials among member libraries. The network also provides our computer network for staff and public access computing and access to a select number of research databases, as well as access to thousands of e-book titles.

This year C/W MARS migrated our library system to an open source program called Evergreen. This software, over time, will enable libraries to customize features and services to better meet the needs of our users.

*“Public libraries are required to meet certain spending levels each year in order to receive state aid. Under the current system, a municipality must fund its library at 2.5% above the average preceding three years budgeted amounts... If a library cannot meet this requirement, it may petition for a one year waiver from the Board of Library Commissioners...”*

## *Facility*

As we have indicated in our long range plan, we have made improvements to areas of the facility. The 23 year old library is showing its age in both cosmetic and functional systems that need upgrading.

In 2012 we completed the enclosure of the *“Cartwheel” statue* that is in front of the library.

Over Memorial Day weekend the front lobby of the library was painted and later in the year new bookshelves made by the town carpenter were installed to improve the appearance of the Friends of the Library Book Sale area.

Minor upgrades were made to the electrical and computer networking system by adding additional outlets in needed areas, and reorganizing the computer networking wiring.

Over the summer, with assistance in funding from the Friends of the Library and the Eldredge Family, the library was able to complete a long-overdue project, *lighting the library flagpole.*



On Sunday, November 11th, Veterans Day we had a flag raising ceremony in honor of Emerson Eldredge to commemorate the event. On that day we unveiled a granite marker in memory of Mr. Eldredge. The marker was generously donated by Tony Khoury.

### **Young Adult Renovation**

*In 2012 we began planning for the 2013 renovation of the Young Adult area of the library.*

Since the opening of the new Bellingham High School and the renovation of the middle school, the use of the library by middle and high school children after school has greatly increased. Over the years we have recognized the need to provide dedicated facility space for this age group.

Given the open floor plan of the library, it is very difficult to have a space that has a group of teens in it and maintain noise levels that are suitable for the rest of the library. Our short-term solution was to move our afterschool program “After School Café” to the community room. This has been a temporary solution, but has led to staffing challenges as it results in two areas to monitor, and limits the use of the community room by other members of the town during the afternoon hours.

For over five years, there has been discussion about enclosing the Young Adult area, to make it a space dedicated for this age group. With the addition of a Young Adult Librarian with a schedule that mirrors the school schedule, we now have the personnel to staff the room in the busiest afterschool hours, and are moving forward with the project.

Our plan is to enclose the room, but to keep it open to the main part of the library during less busy hours, perhaps with a double door.

*The room will be equipped with state of the art technology:*

laptops and tablet computers. It will also highlight our collection of books, DVDs, Music CDs, Books on CDs and other library materials for middle and high school students that will enhance their access to materials to supplement their education and expand their personal interests.

*The space will have separate areas for a variety of activities:*

homework and group work spaces; tables and chairs for craft projects and other uses, a tech bar for using and charging tech devices; spaces for socializing; and an audiovisual center for movies, music and video games.

Part of the renovation will also include *a new emergency exit* from the new enclosed area directly to the outdoors. This exit may, at some point in the future, be used as an exit to an outdoor patio area for the library.

*The renovation plan will include new lighting, carpeting, shelving as well as new technology devices and furnishings.*

Our plan is to request funding from the town for the construction costs and to fund equipment and furnishings through state aid or other local sources.

During 2009 and 2010, with grant funding, we were able to provide the after school program 5 days a week. Since 2011 we have been offering the program 3 days a week and in the last year, with our new Young Adult Librarian, *attendance has increased 50%.*

## Services & Programs for Children

### Preschool Programs

*In an average week the library hosts a minimum of 7 programs for preschoolers*, including story times and sing-alongs with such names as Ring-A-Ding; Alphabits, GOT Mail Story Time, and Book Babies. Each week we also host a Lego Club called Lego Build for Kids. In addition, special story times and other events held this year included:

Fancy Nancy Tea Party; Giant Candy Land; Big Ryan's Tall Tales; Gwendolyn the Graceful Pig; Polar Express; Stuffed Animal Sleepovers (with videos!); Crayon Box Story Time; Ginormous Story Time; Thanksgiving Story Time; and Picnic Stories.



In addition to programs for children at the library, both our Youth Services and Young Adult Librarians have offered their services for programming at the new **Bellingham Police Department Youth Services Center**. This is a program that we support and will continue to assist in any way we can.

### Elementary School Programs

*In an average week the library hosts an average of 4 programs for those in kindergarten through grade 6.*



*Indy the Reading Therapy Dog with his owner Leah Caracino*

One of our most unique programs for early readers, is called "Reading with Indy." Indy is a certified reading therapy dog that visits the library each Monday and children sign up for 15 minute time slots to read to Indy.

Some of the programs in 2012 included: Artrageous; Super Science; Afternoon Movies; Spooky Bingo; Animal World Experience Global Safari; Be a Marine Biologist; Drum Away the Blues; Ecology of Sound; Superhero Saturday; Wimpy Kid Party; Country Club; History Adventure; Gingerbread Man(ia); and Thanksgiving Dessert.

### Middle & High School Programs

*In an average week the library hosts an average of 4 programs for those in grades 5-12.*

Three days each week when school is in session, we host After School Café, a program where middle and high school students can socialize, do homework, play games, participate in crafts and use library computers.

There are a group of 7-10th graders that form our Teen Advisory Board that meets at least once a month to discuss and assist in planning library programs and collection purchases for the Young Adult area.

Special programs for this age group in 2012 include:

Chess Club  
Fort Building  
After School Yoga  
Hunger Games Programs  
Wii Tournaments  
Percy Jackson Programs  
Harry Potter Movie Marathon  
Teen Film Series

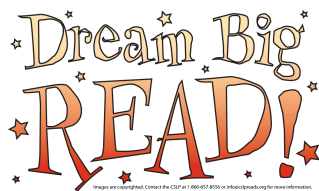
Audience	Programs	Attendance
Family	101	2,289
Preschool	251	8,150
Elementary	82	777
Middle & High School	145	1,422
Homeschoolers	9	141
Total	588	12,779



## Summer Reading, Community Outreach & Other Services

### Summer Reading

This year's Summer Reading Theme was ***Dream Big: Read!*** And Steven Fowler, our Youth Services Librarian, took the theme to heart. For the first time the Summer Reading Kick-off Event, Magic by Scott Jameson, was held off-site, at the Bellingham High School Auditorium and approximately 500 people attended. ***It was our largest children's program ever.***

 Each time a child came to the library and checked out books or attended a library program, they selected a random letter of the alphabet from a bag, and received prizes for forming their letters into words. The longer the word, the bigger the prize!

In addition, we hosted a variety of programs throughout the summer including:

Crafty Dreams ~ Pajamarama  
 Into the Moonlight ~ Mad Libs  
 Creepy Tales ~ Sparky's Puppets  
 History Trivia ~ Teddy Bear Picnic  
 Book Making ~ Fancy Nancy  
 Eyes on Owls ~ That's a Cool Job!  
 Mark Binder Story Telling  
 Stuffed Animal Vet Check-up  
 Shadow Puppet Theatre  
 Moon Crazy by Jackson Gillman  
 Family Feud ~ Out of this World!  
 Geography Trivia  
 Night Lights by Diane Edgecomb  
 Digital Scavenger Hunt  
 Price is Right ~ Battle of the Books

### Community Outreach

***The library hosts meetings of many community groups including:***

American Red Cross Blood Drives;  
 Bellingham Business Association;  
 Bellingham Crafters;  
 Bellingham Sports Groups  
 (soccer, women's softball and  
 volleyball, youth baseball) ;  
 Friends of the Bellingham Library;  
 Girl Scout Sleepovers & Events;  
 Mass Bar Association Mock Trials;  
 Milford Regional Grief Support  
 Group; Mom's Club of Bellingham/  
 Medway; The Polish Club;  
 Town of Bellingham Groups; and  
 numerous Bellingham Condominium  
 Associations: Bay Colony;  
 Bellwood; Birchwood; Brook Estates;  
 Crystal Springs and Maple Brook.

This year the library staff made a concerted effort to increase our community outreach. Through the job seekers program we formed new relationships and tightened bonds with a variety of community members and organizations including: The Bellingham Business Association and The Workforce Central One Stop Career Center in Milford.

We continually strive to improve our relationship with the Bellingham school community. This year, in addition to our new Young Adult

Librarian being a substitute teacher at Bellingham High School (which has significantly improved our connection to the school) we continued to collaborate with the schools by visiting the elementary schools to promote summer reading and a variety of other events.

For the first time, the library offered technology classes at the Senior Center. Through this outreach, we were able to bring those that needed additional assistance, and were interested, back to the library to continue to expand their knowledge.

### Other Services

We are also expanding our online offerings to the community. After more than a year of planning, in January of 2012 we launched the ***newly designed library website***, which is accessed over 5000 times per month. We streamlined the content of the site to make it easier to locate high-use content. This new website is designed in a program that easily allows multiple users to add and update content on the web without any special software.

We have begun to "go where our patrons are" and ***use Facebook to promote library programs*** and events. We have over 500 followers on our Facebook page.

This year we purchased access to online courses through Universal Class. This program offers ***online courses that can be accessed both at the library and at home*** by Bellingham Library card holders. Users can take personal enrichment online courses in topics from Accounting to Yoga.

***Total attendance at  
 Summer Programs  
 3582***

## Adult Programs

The number of adult programs and attendance more than tripled in 2012, primarily due to the success of our *Libraries for Job Seekers Program*.



The library received an LSTA grant in the amount of \$7,000 that was increased by over \$4000 with donations from the Friends of the Library, Target, and UniBank. This was a very successful program that was coordinated by our Reference Librarian, Cecily Christensen, with many of the programs taught by Cecily and Bernadette Rivard, the Library Director.

Those funds were used to assist members of the community in upgrading their skills and knowledge to become more successful job seekers.

With assistance from the Bellingham Business Association and the Workforce Central One Stop Career Center, we were able to offer extensive programming for job seekers that was concluded with a job fair that featured nearly 20 employers, had 140 attendees, and which resulted in over 50 job offers.

We kicked off the program in January of 2012 with Phil Cicio, a Bellingham resident who is a professional motivational speaker.

Each month from January through May we offered a variety of opportunities for job seekers to gain new skills and insights to assist in their job search.

These programs included: Internet, word processing and spreadsheet training classes; resume and cover letter writing workshops; weekly networking meetings with speakers who were experts on a job seeking topic; online job searching training; stress management workshops; open computer lab times; Researching Companies Online Workshop; Career Cruising (an online career assessment tool) training; social networking for job seekers training; image presentation for the interview; mock job interview workshops; how to work a job fair workshop; our first annual job fair; and a final reception to thank program participants and presenters.



According to our records over 20 people obtained jobs through this program. At the final reception, three of the successful job seekers, pictured above, spoke about how the library program was crucial to their job success.

In recognition of the work the library put into this program, Bernadette Rivard, the Library Director, was recognized by the Bellingham Business Association as their 2012 "Citizen of the Year."

## Other Programs

### Workshops & Groups

Clutter Control Workshop  
Dream Interpretation Workshop  
Laughter Yoga  
Weekly Knitting Group Meetings



Pastel Painting with Greg Maichack

### Lectures

Jeff Belanger Ghost Hunting  
Project Apollo Space Program  
Wellness Workshops

### Book Groups & Author Visits

Monthly Book Group Meetings  
Meet 'n Greet Author Jason Hunt  
Meet 'n Greet Author Jeremy Ames

### Computer Training

Learn About... Computers  
Technology Petting Zoos  
Universal Class Online Courses

Individuals Reached	150
Total Attendance	707

Total attendance at these other programs was

449

# Summary of Services

Many of the programs that our outlined in this report would not be possible without additional funding from *The Friends of the Bellingham Public Library*. The Friends routinely fund the museum and attraction passes, the summer reading program and other lectures and events throughout the year.

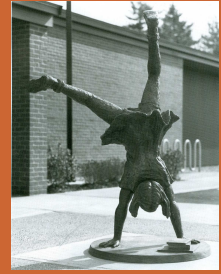
Our *Circulation Staff* is the mainstay of our library services. Their daily dedication and exceptional customer service skills, keep library operations running smoothly.

Our *Youth Services & Young Adult Librarians* show their dedication to serving the children of Bellingham every day. With innovative, fun and educational programs, our youth programs continue to be our most well attended and in demand services.

Our *Reference Librarian* spent 2012 focusing on assisting job seeking members of the community upgrade their skills, conquer their fears, and to look at their situation as a temporary setback, but an opportunity for positive change.

The Library Director, Staff and Trustees thank the members of the Bellingham community for their continued support of the library. To quote Abraham Lincoln, *"My best friend is a person who will give me a book I have not read."* We strive to be that friend to the Bellingham community, be it through a book, a children's program, a computer lesson, or other service.

Other Statistics	
Days open	291
Hours Open	2392
Total Staff Hours	13,764
Total Volunteer Hours	1,266
Items Added to Collection	5,160
Reference Interviews & Questions Answered	1,365
Internet Users	18,412
Public Copier & Printer Pages Printed	25,941
Online Courses Enrolled (3 month period)	100
E-books Downloaded	2,622



## Bellingham Public Library Staff

Bernadette Rivard  
**Director**

Cecily Christensen  
**Reference Librarian**

Steven Fowler  
**Youth Services Librarian**

Amanda Maclure  
**Young Adult Librarian**

Pauline Krajcik  
Anne Kuncewicz  
Barbara Pacak  
**Library Technicians**

Carol Bonnell  
**Library & Accounts Payable Assistant**

Renee Milliken  
Janice Simmons  
Nancy Ross  
Patricia Honour  
**Library Assistants**

Donald Eldredge  
**Custodian**