



# Bellingham Public Library

## Bellingham, Massachusetts

*The hub of the community ... where people and ideas come together*

### Annual Report 2014

"In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim." Linton Weeks

Honorable Selectmen:

This year, during our strategic planning process, we created a vision for the library that you see on our masthead above: "The hub of the community... where people and ideas come together." Our mission states that we embrace the rich heritage and vibrant future of our community; aspire to be the best possible library for the residents of Bellingham: a true community center, the destination place residents consult to acquire and indulge in a lifetime love of learning, literature and leisure activities. In this document we will provide information about the library staff, collection, facility, affiliations, services and program activities in 2014.

We look forward to serving the community in 2015 and beyond!

Bernadette Rivard, Library Director  
Suzanne Garten, Chair, Board of Trustees

Board Members: Amy Bartelloni, Kenneth Hamwey, Laura Howard, Russell Lafond

#### Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees

Suzanne Garten, Chair  
Amy Bartelloni Vice Chair  
Laura Howard, Secretary  
Kenneth Hamwey  
Russell Lafond

#### Did you know?

There has been a 39% increase in library visits in Massachusetts over the last 10 years.

In FY2013 Massachusetts residents borrowed 58 million items from their libraries, about 110 per minute!

### At a glance...

#### Services

55% of Bellingham residents have a library card!

Nearly 100K people visited the library in 2014, an average of 321 people per day.

In July of 2014 we expanded library hours by 4 per week, enabling us to be open Monday through Thursday evenings until 8 pm.

Volunteers worked an average of over 160 hours per month at the library.

Over 1600 people per month visit the library for a session on our public Internet stations or to logon to our WiFi network.

Each month nearly 60 families received discounted admission to a variety of museums and attractions through our Discount Pass Program.

#### Collections

Circulation of library materials is steady. Over 120K items were checked out in 2014.

E-book offerings continue to increase, and over 500 e-books are checked out each month.

The library collection includes over 50,000 items including more than: 40,000 physical books, 3,400 audio books and music CDs, 3,700 movies, 700 magazine issues, and access to millions of physical books and 100s of thousands of ebooks through C/WMARS, our library network.

Materials for people of all ages: Books, movies, audiobooks, video-games, graphic novels, ebooks, etc.

Free access to online language learning, self improvement courses, assistance for job seekers, newspapers, journal articles and so much more, used by over 200 patrons each month.

#### Programs

Over 1300 adults and children attend library programs for children ages 0-12 each month.

The library meeting rooms hosted over 1200 meetings and events.

Each month the library hosts more than 45 programs for children ages 0-12.

Attendance at our afterschool program for middle and high school students has increased by 50% over 2012, 18% in the last year.

The library hosts approximately 10 programs per month for adults of all ages.

The Library Board of Trustees generally meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm.

## *Library Staff, Collection & Affiliations*

### *Staff*



In August of 2014 our 25+ year custodian **Donald Eldredge** retired. Don was the library custodian since the day the Blackstone Street location opened in 1989. He was replaced by **Jim Maher**, a Bellingham resident .

July of 2014 also ushered in a new era in services to middle and high school students as we were able expand our **Youth Services Librarian**, Amanda Maclure’s position from 19.5 to 35 hours. Amanda now has ample time to create and execute programs for that age group, as well as assisting in other library departments as needed.

We continue to host volunteers from the community, including 13 seniors that work at the library through the town’s **Senior Tax-Work Off Program**.

### *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. **We add over 400 items to the collection each month.**

Our reference librarian, Cecily Christensen has been working over the past year on an **inventory of the library collection**. She is not only making sure that the items that are in the library database are on the shelf, she is updating call numbers on the items as necessary.

We have worked over the past year to **improve the physical location of our audio-visual collections**. Our music CDs and DVDs are on new shelving that makes browsing easier.

### *Affiliations*

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

The MBLC is the state agency that certifies libraries and ensures that they meet standards. In order to be eligible for state aid and LSTA federal grants through the MBLC, libraries must meet standards including: meeting the requirement for the number of hours the library is open, the education level of staff, the total municipal budget and the funds spent on library materials.

In 2014, due to a generous 7.48% increase in the library budget, **we were able to meet the state aid requirements without a waiver for the first time since 2009.**

*"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..."*

In the summer of 2014 the library was notified by the MBLC that our application for a federal LSTA grant to implement our **“Customer Experience in the Digital Age”** had been approved. This \$10,000 grant will provide the library with funds for staff training in customer service, specifically in digital literacy. This training will run from January through September of 2015.

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

C/W MARS is our library network. We pay annual dues to fund our use of the shared library database for patron and item records.

This database facilitates the sharing of library materials among member libraries. C/WMARS also provides our computer network for staff and public computers, access to a select number of research databases, as well as access to thousands of e-book titles through Overdrive.

#### *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 located 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.

**In 2014 we were one of 51 libraries chosen to participate in the an MLS pilot project to expand e-book offerings to libraries.** This program, which will launch statewide in 2015, provides access to 3 separate catalogs of ebooks from the following vendors: Baker & Taylor, through their Magic Wall Service; a service called BiblioBoard from BiblioLabs; and access to Proquest’s E-Book Library (a collection of tens of thousands of books, the majority are nonfiction titles, on academic and professional topics.)

## Facility

In 2014 we updated our long range plan to prioritize facility upgrades that we anticipate needing in the next 5 years.

### *Those priorities included:*

- Increasing Parking
- Replace Event Sign
- Enclosing the Young Adult Space
- Replacing Carpeting
- Painting Interior and Exterior
- Upgrading Lighting
- Installing a Generator

In 2014, we began addressing some of these issues.

***At the fall 2014 town meeting, funds were approved to expand and improve the library parking lot.*** In December 2014 trees were removed to prepare for the spring expansion of the parking lot. The expanded lot will include 16-20 unpaved spaces at the end of the current parking lot, as well as expand the parking available on the access road to the football field, enabling people to park head-in. There will be a set of concrete stairs installed so people can easily walk from the field parking lot to the library.



Dan Perkins, an Eagle Scout candidate, raised funds and worked with Eagle Scout Josh Harris of Harris Landscaping to replace the worn library event sign with a beautiful sign with granite posts.

Jim Maher, our custodian, has begun painting many areas of the interior and exterior of the building.

### Young Adult Renovation

***We delayed implementation of the renovation of the Young Adult space in the library in order to expand the parking lot.***

However, in October of 2015 we plan to present the renovation plan to town meeting for funding approval.

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. ***In 2013 and 2014 attendance at our after school program for middle and high school students grew by over nearly 50% with nearly 400 monthly visits by middle and high school students in the afterschool hours.*** With the fall of 2015 integration of the 4th graders into the middle school, we are planning to serve an even greater number of children from the middle and high schools.

Given the open floor plan of the library, it is very difficult to have a space that has that many people 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 six years, we have been discussing enclosing the Young Adult area, to make it a space dedicated for this age group.

With the addition of a full time Youth Services Librarian to serve this age group, we now have the personnel to staff the room in the busiest afterschool hours, and are looking forward to moving ahead 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, with a wide entry double door.

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

***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 Amanda Maclure as our Young Adult Librarian, ***attendance has continued to increase each year.***

## Services & Programs for Children

### Preschool Programs

In an average week the library hosts a minimum of 8 programs for preschoolers, including story times and sing-alongs with such names as Ring-A-Ding; Alphabits, GOT Mail Story Time, Magic School Bus, 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:



Pete the Cat gives a thumbs up to Summer Reading!

Hands on Fun with STEM; our first Alphabits Graduation; a Spring Luau; a Teddy Bear Picnic; a Pirates & Princesses Party and visits from Pete the Cat and The Grinch.



Mr. Steve (Steven Fowler, Youth Services Librarian) and Library Trustee Amy Bartelloni meet Santa and The Grinch!

### Elementary School Programs

In an average week the library hosts at least 3 programs for those in kindergarten through grade 6, including The Bellingham Library Cartwheel Book Awards; A Family Book Club; Super Science, Tech Time; The Write Stuff; Shake it Up; and Artrageous.

Some of the special programs in 2014 included: a Writing Workshop with Author Kate Klise; a visit from the Blue Star Planetarium; 3D Printing Instruction; Full STEAM Ahead and a Read-a-Thon!



Brothers participating in the library's Read-A-Thon in their "Boston Strong" T-shirts on Marathon Monday of school vacation week.

### For Families

The library hosts programs for families to attend as a group.



Mr. Steve greets Daisy the Pig in her preferred fashion. With a kiss!

This year our family events included: a Stuffed Animal Sleepover with Blades, the Bruins Mascot; Peter Boie Magician; Big Ryan's Tall Tales; Toe Jam Puppet Band; Farmer

Minor & Daisy; Todd Brodeur's Frisbee Show and the Polar Express.

### 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.

Special programs for this age group in 2014 included: Monthly Mother/Daughter Book Club; video game tournaments; summer-themed crafts; science experiments; glow in the dark painting; cupcake decorating, fort building, water games, giant CandyLand, assembling aquadomes; and a Doctor Who Marathon!

This year was the first year that the library and Bellingham's middle school collaborated with the Weston Observatory to bring an educational seismologist to the library to teach the seismology portion of the curriculum.



8th Grade Bellingham Memorial Middle School Earth Science Class on Earthquakes and Seismology, held at the library!

Audience	Programs	Attendance
Family	116	2,608
Preschool	312	13,117
Elementary	115	853
Middle & High	130	1,711
Homeschoolers	16	1,670
<b>Total</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>19,959</b>
Last Year	664	19,568
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+4%</b>	<b>+2%</b>

## Summer Reading, Community Outreach, & Other Services

### Summer Reading

This year's Summer Reading Theme was ***Fizz Boom Read***. For the third year in a row the Summer Reading Kick-off Event, with Peter Boie, Magician, as the performer, was held off-site, at the Bellingham High School Auditorium and was attended by approximately 350 people.

Each time a child came to the library and checked out books or attended a library program they checked off an element on their periodic table of elements and when they completed a sheet, they received a prize.



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

- Super Evening for Superheroes
- Stuffed Animal Vet Checkup & Spa
- Fancy Nancy Party
- Big Ryan's Tall Tales
- Toe Jam Puppet Band
- Screening of "Frozen"
- Magician Bob Conrad



Mr. Steve (Superman) Fowler, leads superhero kids on a superhero adventure!

**Total attendance at Summer Programs**  
**3,678**

### Community Outreach

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

- Bellingham Crafters
- Bellingham Commission on Disability
- Bellingham Cultural Council
- Bellingham Democratic Caucus
- Bellingham Girls & Women's Softball
- Bellingham Youth Soccer
- Boy & Girl Scout Groups
- Massachusetts Library System
- MetroWest Chapter of the Society for Financial Awareness
- Mom's Club of Medway/Bellingham PTO Groups
- Realty Executives Easter Egg Hunt and the following condo groups:
- Bay Colony
- Bellwood
- Brook Estates
- Caryville Crossing
- Crystal Springs
- Twin Brook

This year the library staff made a concerted effort to increase our community outreach.

Our Youth Services Librarian visited classrooms in all three elementary schools in town.

### Other Services

We are also continuing to expand our online offerings to the community. The library website, which is accessed over 10,000 times per month, is our main vehicle to connect with the community. We continue to streamline the content of the site to make it easier to locate high-use content. On the website library users can: reserve and renew library materials online through the online catalog; reserve museum and attraction passes; register for library programs and contact library staff.



We also offer the ability to access the following resources: **eBooks** through Overdrive, Baker & Taylor's Magic Wall; ProQuest's E-Book Library and BiblioBoard.

Take an online personal improvement class through **Universal Class**. Course topics range from Accounting to Yoga.

Learn a new language online through **Mango Languages**. Over 60 world languages are available including French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and even Pirate!

Patrons looking for assistance with job searching can access **Career Cruising**, our online career assessment and job searching tool.

We continue to "go where our patrons are" and use **Facebook** to promote library programs and community notices and events. We have almost 900 followers on our Facebook page.

**Electronic Services Statistics**

Electronic Newsletter Subscribers: 1567

Pinterest Followers: 278

Universal Class Courses Enrolled: 217

Mango Languages Users: 68

Ebooks Downloaded: 5958

The library hosted the following programs for adults:

## *Adult Programs*

### *Lectures*



Value of the Book, presented by Rhode Island Book Appraiser, Ray Rickman

Show & Tell Bellingham

### *Book Groups & Author Meet 'n Grets*

- Monthly Book Group Meetings
- Mass Book Award Winner Summer Reading for Adults
- *Morphine Dream* author Donald Brown
- *Butterfly Club* author Phyllis Calvey
- *Easy Walks in Massachusetts* author Marjorie Turner Hollman
- *Postcard History of Norfolk County* authors James & Paul Tedesco



Library Trustee, Amy Bartelloni, published her first book, **Andromeda**, in 2014. The library hosted her book launch party.

### *Workshops & Groups*

- Monthly Finance Workshops sponsored by the MetroWest Chapter of the Society for Financial Awareness (SOFA)
- Weekly Yoga Class with Pat Spencer



Painting Nights with Greg Maichack & Kathy Wotton

	2013	2014	Increase
<b>Total Programs</b>	90	120	+25%
<b>Attendance</b>	720	1061	+32%

### *STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) Programming*



Open House for Seismology & Science Programing

3D Printing Workshops were held twice a month throughout the year.

### *Fundraising*



In September the Friends of the Library celebrated 120 years of library service, 25 years at Blackstone Street, with a Wine & Cheese Fundraiser.



The library hosted Bellingham's 3rd Annual Veterans Day Ceremony honoring three local veterans:  
 Captain Maura Stevens  
 Tech Sergeant John Kristant  
 Lt. Colonel Christopher Graves.  
 The library also hosted "Veterans Telling Our Stories".

# Library Long Range Planning

This year, the library surveyed the community to assist us with creating a 5 year Long Range Plan and setting goals and an action plan for reaching those goals. Our survey told us how important the library is to the community and helped us set goals for the next 5 years. Those goals include:

## Facility Goals

Expand the parking lot  
 Renovate young adult space  
 Create a café space  
 Create space for storage  
 Create more small meeting rooms  
 Replace carpeting

## Technology Goals

Install indoor electronic message board  
 Self-checkout machine  
 Mobile app for website  
 Library vending machine to dispense books and DVDs

## Programs & Services

Expand staff training opportunities  
 Expand STEM Programming  
 Offer a “Create Space”  
 Offer multigenerational programs  
 Explore non-traditional borrowing programs (tool library, seed library, etc.)  
 Offer Saturday morning hours in the summer  
 Adapt afterschool programming to meet community needs  
 Maintain vibrant children’s programming

We have created a 5 year action plan on implementation of these goals so we can meet our vision statement “The Bellingham Library is the hub of the community... where people and ideas come together.”

We look forward to continue offering creative and innovative programming that meets the needs of Bellingham residents for today and in the future.

*“A great library doesn't have to be big or beautiful. It doesn't have to have the best facilities or the most efficient staff or the most users. A great library provides. It is enmeshed in the life of a community in a way that makes it indispensable. A great library is one nobody notices because it is always there, and always has what people need.”*

— Vicki Myron, *Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the World*



## Bellingham Public Library Staff

Bernadette Rivard  
**Director**

Cecily Christensen  
**Reference Librarian**

Steven Fowler  
**Senior Youth Services Librarian, Ages 0-12**

Amanda Maclure  
**Youth Services Librarian, Ages 10-18**

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

Carol Bonnell  
**Library & Accounts Payable Assistant**

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

Jim Maher  
**Custodian**

Other Statistics	2013	2014	Difference
Hours Open	2,395	2,577	+7%
Total Staff Hours	14,090	14,659	+4%
Total Volunteer Hours	1,850	1,931	+4%
Internet Users * includes WiFi Users in 2014	14,272	19,997	+29%
Public Copier & Printer Pages Printed	18,264	23,207	+21%
E-books Downloaded	3,153	5,958	+47%