



Bellingham Public Library

Bellingham, Massachusetts

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

Annual Report 2015

When I got my library card, that's when my life began. +

. Rita Mae Brown

Honorable Selectmen:

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 2015 we aspired to fill this mission, and in many areas have been extremely successful. In this document we will provide information about the library staff, collection, facility, affiliations, services and program activities in 2015 that show that success.

We look forward for the changes that are scheduled for 2016 and continue to aspire to be "The hub of the community...where people and ideas come together."

Bernadette Rivard, Library Director

Amy Bartelloni, Chair - Library Board of Trustees

Board Members: Suzanne Garten, Laura Howard, Russell Lafond, Alyssa Perry

Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees

Amy Bartelloni, Chair
Suzanne Garten, Vice Chair
Alyssa Perry, Secretary
Laura Howard
Russell Lafond

Did you know?

In-person visits to public libraries in Massachusetts have increased 50% and circulation has increased 29% since 2000!

At a glance...

Services

Over 50% of Bellingham residents have a library card!

Over 104,000 people visited the library in 2015, an average of 365 people per day, a 10% increase over 2014.

Volunteers worked an average of about 150 hours per month at the library.

Nearly 2000 people per month visit the library for a session on our public Internet stations or to logon to our WiFi network. This is up 15% over last year.

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

Each month over 2200 pages are printed from our public copier, costing substantially less than prices at other local copying/printing services.

Collections

Circulation of library materials is steady. Over 120K items were checked out in 2015.

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

The library collection includes nearly 50,000 items including more than: 44,000 physical books, 3,700 audio books and music CDs, 3,600 movies, 800 magazine issues, and access to millions of physical books and 100s of thousands of e-books through C/WMARS, our library network.

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

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

Programs

Over 1700 adults and children attend library programs for children ages 0-12 **each month**, up 16% from 2014.

Each month the library hosts more than 50 programs for children ages 0-12, up 8% from 2014.

Attendance at our afterschool program for middle and high school students has increased by nearly 50% over 2014, on top of the 18% increase between 2013 and 2014.

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

The library meeting rooms hosted over 1200 meetings and events.

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

All are welcome to attend.

Library Staff, Collection & Affiliations

Staff

In 2015, after 22 years of service to the Bellingham Library and its patrons, part-time employee Janice Simmons retired. Her position was filled by Jane Vichi, a longtime Bellingham resident and library supporter.

For the fall 2015 semester, we hosted a Library Science Graduate student from San Jose State University, Westborough resident Amy Kuilema, for a 10 week Internship. Amy assisted in the children's and young adult departments with afterschool programming, as well as an evaluation of the children's nonfiction collection.

We continue to host volunteers from the community, including 15 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 450 items to the collection each month.**

In 2015, our reference librarian, Cecily Christensen completed an *inventory of the library collection in the nonfiction area*. She made sure that the items that are in the library database are on the shelf, and updated their call numbers as necessary.

In preparation for the renovation of the Young Adult area, we have extensively weeded the YA collection, moved some of the collections to storage for the duration of the renovation, and relocated the bulk of the collection to the temporary YA space located in the rear of the reference area of the library.

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 2015, for the second continuous year, the library met the state aid requirements without a waiver application.

"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 2015 the library implemented the *"Customer Experience in the Digital Age" grant that had been awarded by the MBLC*. This \$10,000 grant provided the library with funds for staff training in customer service, specifically in digital literacy. This training ran from January through September of 2015.

Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (C/W MARS)

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/W MARS also provides our computer network for staff and public computers, our WiFi network, 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 2015 MLS also launched a statewide eBook platform called Commonwealth eBook Collections. This program, which we were a pilot library for in 2014, 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).

Our 2014 long range plan prioritized facility upgrades that we anticipate needing in the next 5 years.

Those priorities included:

- Replace Event Sign
- Increase Parking
- Enclose the Young Adult Space
- Replace Carpeting
- Paint the Interior and Exterior
- Upgrade Lighting
- Install a Generator

In 2014, we began addressing some of these issues.

The Event sign was replaced as an Eagle Scout Project in the fall of 2014.

At the Fall 2014 Town Meeting, funds were approved to expand and improve the library parking lot. In December of 2014 the trees were cleared from the lot. Over the summer of 2015 the lot was completed and the library now has 16 additional unpaved parking spaces and the access road to the football field has been expanded to accommodate head in parking, doubling the number of available parking spaces in that area. In addition, the entire library parking lot was sealcoated and line striped, with curb stops installed.



Jim Maher, our custodian, has continued to paint many areas of the interior and exterior of the building.

In 2015 we converted one of our private study rooms into a group quiet room with study carrels for up to 6 people to have a quiet space to study and research.

Young Adult Renovation

At the 2015 Fall Town Meeting, voters approved the library's request for \$122,000 to renovate and enclose the Young Adult Area of the Library.

Between 2014 and 2015, the attendance at our afterschool programs again grew by 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 has been 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. But this 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.

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 completing the project in early 2016.

Our plan includes enclosing the room, but keeping it open to the main part of the library during less busy hours, with a wide entry double door.

The plan also includes a study room that will accommodate 2-3 people (great for tutors and students!) and a storage closet.

During the renovation, we have relocated a good portion of the YA collection and seating from the current area to the rear of the library, so we can continue to offer services during the renovation.



The renovated room will be equipped with state of the art technology, including laptops and tablet computers. It will also highlight our collection of books and other library materials for middle and high school students that will 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. The town is funding the construction costs. The Friends of the Library, fundraising, our state aid funds and other sources will fund the equipment and furnishings.

The formal afterschool programming which began in 2009 grows to serve more and more middle and high school students each year. We look forward to offering middle and high school students a state of the art facility for optimal afterschool programming.

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:

Infant Massage
Holiday Story Times for Preschoolers
Dental Health For Preschoolers
Creative Ballet



For Families

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

This year our family events included:

Despicable Me Party
Mad Hatter's Tea Party
Read Across America Party
Cinco de Mayo Party
Some More S'mores
Edible Haunted Houses
Pirate Party
Polar Express
Giant Candyland



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, Tail Waggin' Tutors, and Artrageous.

Some of the special programs in 2015 included:

Harry Potter Book Night
April Fools Day Pranks
Heroes of Mythology
Hobby Hour
Tales of the Cryptids
Angry Birds Hour



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.

We also host a monthly Middle School Advisory Board Meeting to get input from the students on library programs and services.

Special programs for this age group in 2015 included: Monthly Mother/Daughter Book Club, YA Book Club for Teens & Adults, Monthly Anime Club, and an April School Vacation Babysitting Course for kids in grades 5-12.

During the Summer of 2015 we offered a variety of programs for middle and high school students, including: a weekly craft program called "Crafternoons," a weekly game time called "Games & Stuff", and a parent/child paint night.



This year was the second year that the library's seismology program worked with Bellingham's middle school teachers to arrange for the 8th graders to visit and learn from the library's seismograph as part of their Earth Science Class.

Audience	Programs	Attendance
Family	59	2,964
Preschool	384	16,052
Elementary	124	1,115
Middle & High	163	2,754
Homeschoolers & Outreach	22	1,212
Total	752	24,097
Last Year	689	19,959
Difference	+9%	+21%

Summer Reading, Community Outreach, & Other Services

Summer Reading

This year's Summer Reading Theme was *Every Hero Has a Story*. For the fourth year in a row the Summer Reading Kick-off Event, with Casey Carle of Bubblemania, was held off-site, at the Bellingham High School Auditorium and was attended by over 375 people.



Each time a child came to the library and checked out books or attended a library program they received a Super Hero Bingo Decal to affix to their Superhero Bingo Card. When they made a BINGO on their card, they received a small prize and could take a chance on winning a bigger/better prize.

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



Stories with Bellingham Heroes
Animal Affair Petting Zoo
Fancy Nancy Super Secret Surprise Party
Family Movies
Villain Party
Big Ryan's Tall Tales
Magic Lessons with Ed the Wizard
Deborah Sampson Farm Girl
USS Constitution Built to Win Challenge
Avengers Assemble
Super Night

**Total attendance at
Summer Programs
4,575, up from
3,678 in 2014!**

Community Outreach

The library hosts meetings of many community groups including:

Bellingham Crafters
Bellingham Cultural Council
Bellingham Girls & Women's Softball
Bellingham Pop Warner
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 by participating in community events like the Pumpkin Stroll and Harvest Festival.

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

We offer online personal improvement classes through **Universal Class**. Course topics range from Accounting to Yoga.

Patrons can 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 could 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 as well as community notices and events. We have over 1,100 followers of our Facebook page (300 more than last year)!

Electronic Services

Statistics

Electronic Newsletter Subscribers:
1662
Pinterest Followers:
502
Universal Class Courses Enrolled:
37
Mango Languages Users:
89
Ebooks Downloaded:
5574

The library hosted the following programs for adults:

Lectures & Music



Bellingham Author Jeff Belanger presented his Halloween "Supernatural Evening" in October.

- Beyond Genealogy - Documenting Your Family History for Your Children, presented by Marjorie Turner Hollman & Bernadette Rivard
- Native American Flutes, presented by Alida Santandrea



Aaron Krerowicz, a Beatles scholar, presented "The Beatles: Band of the Sixties" in October

2015

Total Programs 113
Attendance 885

Adult Programs

Workshops & Groups

- Monthly Finance Workshops sponsored by the MetroWest Chapter of the Society for Financial Awareness (SOFA)
- Series of three career workshops facilitated by the Employment & Training Resources Norwood office.
- Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Community Outreach Program
- Developing the Brain from the Bottom Up, presented by Brain Fit Academy



Painting Nights with Bellingham resident Kathy Wotton of Artworks Studio

Book Groups & Author Meet 'n Greet

- Monthly Book Group Meetings
- Easy Walks in Massachusetts** author Marjorie Turner Hollman discussing Easy Walks to Local Leaf Peeping
- Remembering Hurricanes from the 1950s** presented by author Eamon McCarthy Earls



Daniel Korschun, author of We are Market Basket, discussed his research for his book about the 2014 Market Basket saga



For the 4th year, the library hosted the Town's Veterans Day Ceremony

Veterans Benjamin Stratman, Lt. Col. Jason Borovies, and Brianna Tucker place a wreath in front of the library flagpole

New in 2015 and Coming in 2016!

We've begun offering new services late in 2015 and we have even more coming in 2016! The library is reaching out to offer the community more services, both onsite and online!

In late 2015 the library began lending **WiFi Hotspots**. No Internet at home? Borrow ours for: school papers and projects, job searching online, and connecting to your laptop or tablet. On a long car trip? Have the kids in the backseat streaming movies, music or other content. On vacation? Beach or mountain cabin with no Internet? Bring the Internet with you!

We will be launching the following electronic services in 2016:

Download the **Bellingham Library App** from the Google Play Store or Apple Store and access your library account and the catalog, register for programs and reserve museum passes.

Learn something new with **Learning Express Library**, our new online service that offers:

Practice lessons and study aids for middle, elementary and high school students.

Practice tests, interactive tutorials and eBooks, including SAT and ACT tests for college preparation.

Practice HISET tests to prepare for high school equivalency tests. HISET has replaced the GED in Massachusetts.

Improve your math, writing, reading, grammar and speaking skills, and study for the US Citizenship test.

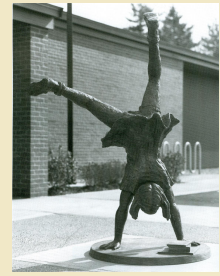
Prepare for careers and get career and job advice.

Download and Stream free music through **Freegal® Music**! Each week patrons will be permitted to download 3 songs to keep and stream up to 3 hours per day of music!

We are working on becoming a **Science Resource Center**! Because of our work with the Weston Observatory and other science programming, the Bellingham Library is one of 3 Massachusetts libraries asked to participate in a program coordinated by The Maine State Library and Cornerstones of Science, a Maine non-profit. Over the next couple of years, we will be working with Cornerstones to establish and test science programming in the library to assist them in creating a national model for libraries to duplicate to offer science programming in their communities. This \$10,000 grant will be used to fund materials, program presenters, supplies and equipment necessary to offer more science programming in the library.

In 2015 the American Library Association Launched their "Libraries Transform" program. At the Bellingham Library we are always looking for ways to transform to meet and exceed community expectations.

Other Statistics	2014	2015	Difference
Hours Open	2,577	2592	+0.6%
Total Staff Hours	14,659	14,759	+0.7%
Total Volunteer Hours	1,931	1,784	-7.6%
Internet Users Wired & WiFi	19,997	23,304	+14.2%
Public Copier & Printer Pages Printed	23,207	26,993	+14.2%
E-books Downloaded	5,958	5,574	-6.5%



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
Jane Vichi
Nancy Ross
Patricia Honour
Library Assistants

Jim Maher
Custodian