

CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Melissa Saalfield, Chair
Cristina Blau
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Heather Peachey
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To structure the work of the Library Committee in 2011, members created several goals:

- maintain the institution's financial stability and well-being;
- support of immediate and long-range planning efforts;
- support policy development and update existing policies and procedures;
- improve communications;
- enhance patron experience;
- explore and implement new technologies; and
- take a leadership role in developing programming for all ages drawing on library and community resources.

Additionally, the Library Committee, in conjunction with the staff and the Library Corporation, revised the institution's mission as follows:

The mission of the Concord Free Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning and to actively promote personal enrichment by connecting community members to information, ideas, culture, unique historical resources and each other, in a tradition of service, innovation and excellence.

Following establishment of these guideposts, the Committee, with the Library Director, undertook reviews of a number of policies (e.g. meeting room use, Kindle access, patron privacy, and use of surveillance cameras). The Committee invited members of Library departments to present status reports on their activities (Judith Gray—reference, Leslie Wilson—special collections, Caroline Nie—technical services and Robin Demas—circulation). Other guests included Brookline Library Director, Chuck Flaherty, who described the adoption of an RFID system at that library. Flaherty lent his expertise to help Concord prepare for the initial introduction of this service. Funding for the RFID system was approved at the 2011 Town Meeting.

The implementation of RFID is expected to improve

the speed and accuracy of circulation functions and inventory control. In the past decade, the Library has experienced a substantial increase in circulation without a proportionate increase in staffing. In conjunction with self-checkout, libraries with RFID report approximately 80% of their circulation transactions no longer require direct staff assistance. The goal is to free up staff to better serve the public. Work is currently underway to tag all library items, a process that will take many months. As part of the Fowler Library renovation, all items were “tagged” so the bulk of the RFID implementation centers on items maintained at the Main Library.

The highpoint for the Concord Free Public Library in 2011 most certainly was the reopening of the Fowler Library following its masterful redevelopment and expansion. This highly anticipated event occurred in March. In addition to RFID at Fowler, the structure now has full wireless access. The project included the creation of a children's room, young adult area and large community meeting room outfitted with multiple use technology. Highly secure climate-controlled storage for special collections was also created in the basement.

Work on the long range plan continued under the leadership of Chair, Cristina Blau. Other Committee members included: Elise Woodward (Selectman); Kerry Cronin (Library Director), Paul Dewey, Cristina Blau, Bob Sekuler, Melissa Saalfield (Library Committee); Di Clymer, Walter Birge, Sherry Litwack (Library Corporation); Robin Cichetti (Concord Public Schools); Claire Greene (Friends of the Library); Leslie Wilson and Caroline Nie (staff).

Among the highpoints of their work was a Town-wide visioning session held in September. Residents of the Town were invited to join with the Long Range Planning Committee, Town Manager and other Town officials to focus on service and the patron experience. At a November joint meeting of the Library Committee, Library Corporation and Friends of the Library, Cristina Blau presented an overview of some of the findings of the Committee to date. A written long range plan is expected to be completed in early 2012.

As 2011 came to a close, the Library Committee and the Library Director continued to grapple with issues of technology (e.g. what exists, what new technologies to

invest in), policies over use of e-readers and tablets, space allocation (adapting existing spaces to serve other uses), programming and customer service. A comprehensive review of the Library's website emerged as an important need. The existing website, funded by the Library Corporation, is widely acknowledged to be outdated. In the coming year, the redevelopment of this site will require the combined efforts of staff, Corporation and Committee to ensure the Library continues to have a strong and vital web presence.

The extraordinary pace of new technology poses challenges but also opportunities for the Concord Free Public Library. Making the right decisions will require the best thinking of everyone who helps shape this Town treasure. The Library Committee invites residents to attend its monthly meetings, held the second Tuesday of each month at 7PM in the Main Library. Patrons are also encouraged to visit the library website: www.concordlibrary.org and sign up for the library e-newsletter.

CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION

Kerry Cronin,
Library Director

The mission of the Concord Free Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning and to actively promote personal enrichment by connecting community members to information, ideas, culture, unique historical resources, and each other in a tradition of innovation and excellence.

2011 marked a very exciting year in the history of the Concord Free Public Library with the reopening of the Fowler Branch Library in late March. We are grateful to the Library Corporation and the residents of Concord for their generosity and support in making it possible for us to provide library services in this beautiful, state of the art facility. It was thrilling to see the looks on the faces of residents of all ages as they entered the renovated Branch Library on opening day and to see how quickly they resumed library activities of reading to children, using computers, and browsing the new book and magazine shelves. Opening day was truly a celebration of community. Special presentations by renowned children's authors/illustrators, Ilse Plume and Steven Kellogg, further added to the festivities.

At Town Meeting voters approved the capital budget request to implement Radio Identification technology (RFID) at the Concord Free Public Library. Once implemented, the circulation process will be expedited by the availability of additional self-checkout machines and a more streamlined process. This will enable a more customized library experience with staff members able to accompany patrons to the stacks to assist in the use of the collection, as needed. The RFID planning team has benefited greatly from site visits to Brookline, Sudbury, and Wellesley to view RFID technology in operation. Library staff members have done a terrific job of preparing and tagging the collections and we look forward to fully implementing RFID later in the fiscal year.

We hosted the Library's first in-service training day, during which 13 staff members with 20 years or more of service were honored in a special ceremony, which was attended by the Town Manager, Human Resources Director, Library Committee Members, Library Corporation Trustees, and members of the Friends of CFPL. The half day event included a training session on reader's advisory techniques, a speaker on technology trends and a lovely luncheon in celebration of the staff and our collective service to the Town. In addition, we were delighted that our nominee, Robin Demas, Head of Circulation, received the 2011 Paralibrarian Advocate of the Year Award from the Massachusetts Library Association for her work encouraging the professional development and contributions of the Circulation staff. Library staff members attended Minuteman Library Network trainings, as well as State, regional, and national conferences to refresh their skills.

Throughout 2011, the Library's Long Range Planning Team, spearheaded by the Library Committee, continued to meet to gather information from the community regarding future service directions. This included a community visioning session. The Planning Team's work was aided by design proposals developed by Library staff members in five strategic areas including: collections, facilities, staff satisfaction / development, technology, and space planning. We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Friends of the Concord Free Public Library, who purchased 5 Kindle eBook Readers with digital content and have earmarked additional funds from their dynamic Private Libraries Tour for the purchase of new

technologies and training to assist the Library's growth in this area. The Library's multi-year service plan will be available during the first quarter of 2012.

Thank you to my colleagues at the Concord Free Public Library for their dedicated service to the Concord community, to the Library Corporation Trustees, Friends of the Concord Free Public Library, Library Committee members, and our many library volunteers and supporters.

Please enjoy the following report of the Library's 2011 activities.

Library Facts at a Glance (FY 2011* Statistics)	
Circulation	**419,203
Collection holdings	284,012
Interlibrary loans received	49,176
Interlibrary loans provided	67,780
Registered Concord borrowers	11,664
New items (excluding magazines)	13,000
Audio books and music CDs	14,860
DVDs	8,884
Downloadable eBooks & Audiobooks	5,835
Hours libraries open	5,348
Children's programs held	154
Program attendance	2,656
Adult and Young Adult programs	73
Program attendance	3,325
Number of Volunteers	155
Number of hours worked	7,780
Wireless Internet Access logins/month	1,300
Website Page Views/month	+56,000
* July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	
** Fowler Branch Library was closed for renovation; Harvey Wheeler Community Center served as a satellite location.	

CIRCULATION

- Funding was approved at Town Meeting for an RFID system to enhance circulation and security. Circulation staff and volunteers are working to ready each item for use with this system.
- The Massachusetts Library System which oversees the Statewide library delivery, contracted upgraded software that requires barcodes to be placed on the outside of all books traveling through the system and virtually eliminates the need for paper transit slips, resulting in greater efficiency. Circulation staff and volunteers have been duplicating barcodes for outside placement.
- Circulation welcomed Limited Status employee Laura Chrzanowski. Laura works at both the Main Library and the Fowler Branch.
- The successful Direct To You Home Delivery Program meets the library needs of homebound Concord

residents. During 2011, the Circulation Department delivered to over 15 residents.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

- As always, one of our favorite activities was reading aloud to children in our storytimes and pajama storytime.
- Ed Morgan, the singer and musician for young children, gave concerts at the Fowler Library and at the Main Library.
- Many children took part in the on-line summer reading club, reading books and writing book reviews. Staff visited elementary school classes to provide a presentation illustrating all of the summer activities at the Library. We created numerous booklists and worked with the school librarians to advertise the fun summer activities for all ages.
- There are several book discussion groups that meet monthly throughout the year. Kindergarten readers take part in the Special K group, third grade readers attend the BookEaters group, and a group of 4th and 5th grade readers gather at night to discuss popular titles.
- The theme for this year's Concord Reads program was entitled *March: Fiction from Life*. The Children's Room hosted a variety of related thematic programs, including: parlor games of the Civil War era, a discussion of *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott, a craft program painting unglazed plates with scenes of Concord, and showings of the film, *Little Women* and the PBS documentary, *Louisa May Alcott: The Woman Behind Little Women*.
- Summer Concerts on the Lawn series included: Caribbean music by PanNeubean Steel, Mexican music by Veronica Robles and her Mariachi Band, music of the Andes played by Inkas Wasi and marches, patriotic and jazz favorites played by the Bay State Winds from the United States Air Force Band of Liberty. Area residents enjoyed the concerts immensely, as many came to picnic, listen, and dance to the rhythmic tunes.
- Family films shown on Friday afternoons during the summer to help beat the heat were also well received.
- Many programs were planned with teens in mind, as improving services to this age group remains an organizational goal. In addition to our popular bi-annual CCHS Study Day, we held the following popular programs: a series of knitting classes; a monthly First Friday, Food and Flicks which included a feature film and refreshments; a Balsa Wood Airplane workshop; a workshop on creating Clay Wall Decoration; Chinese Dance lessons; cake decoration; and paper snowflake folding and instruction. Additional enhancements for this age group included a reconfiguration of the Main Library's teen area, so that it is more open and spacious and teens can enter the area from two locations.
- The Library has been working with the Youth Coor-

dinator, Erin Duggan, to create a warm and inviting atmosphere for the youth of Concord. We are seeing more “regulars” who do their homework, take part in the workshops and meet up with their friends at the Library.

- World renowned ornithologist and tree expert David Sibley gave a presentation on Concord and area trees.
- The Leslie Riedel Memorial Lecture for Young People was given by author/illustrator Chris Van Allsburg, who offered a magical *Polar Express* evening complete with bell ringing, hot chocolate, and snowy weather.
- A special gift of a decorated book bag that includes a book and information about Library services to families is awarded to Concord families whose babies are delivered at the Emerson Hospital. This program is co-sponsored with the Friends of the Concord Free Public Library.

FOWLER BRANCH

We thank our neighbors at the Council on Aging for graciously hosting our Fowler Express location in their building until mid-March of this year.

- The Fowler Branch Library reopened on March 26. Since we have opened in our new space, we have been enormously busy, with circulation figures way up and a building filled every day with patrons using computers and wi-fi, browsing quietly, studying and reading to children. The much-expanded young adult space has finally given young adults a space of their own. The new meeting room has been used by a variety of groups for programs and meetings.
- We welcomed new staff members Laura Chrzanowski and Kathryn Smith.
- During the move into the new space, the bulk of the Fowler collection was prepared for the future RFID circulation system. Since the move, staff has continued to place tags in the remainder of the collection, as well as placing barcode labels on the front of all Fowler materials in order to comply with new delivery regulations.
- Many programs were held at the Fowler branch throughout the year: Ed Morgan conducted a monthly sing-along for preschool children; the popular Summer Reading Club was held for school age children; two craft programs were hosted for kids during the summer months; an ongoing Mother/Daughter book group; and Fowler was once again the venue for the New Authors program during the Concord Author Festival. The biggest event of the year was the Grand Opening of the newly renovated Fowler Branch Library on May 14, featuring authors/illustrators Steven Kellogg and Ilse Plume. A poster drawn by Steven Kellogg hangs in the Fowler children’s room to commemorate this wonderful event.



Many people took part in the joyous celebration of the Fowler Library’s grand re-opening.

REFERENCE

- The Minuteman Library Network launched a new interface to the on-line catalog called “Encore,” which is an Amazon-like alternative to the classic catalog with tags instead of traditional subject headings.
- CFPL added new databases in response to patron interests, with the convenience of remote access: for genealogists --Heritagequest, a digital resource that combines searchable images of U.S. federal genealogical census records with digitized books containing family and local histories from around the country, which complements the popular in-library database --Ancestry.com; for investors: Valueline, an on-line alternative to the print reports still available at the reference desk; and for savvy shoppers: Consumer Reports on-line with Cars Best Deals Plus.
- In order to expedite the availability of popular digital titles, the Library has started to develop a local eBook and downloadable audio book collection for Concord residents through OverDrive’s Advantage Program.
- An LSTA Reader’s Advisory grant provided for staff training and enhanced services for readers, including display equipment for new books and booklists, staff-wide training in reader’s advisory, a year-long focus on historical fiction with a staff genre study, an author event featuring Chris Bohjalian, and a month of Concord Reads programs on “fiction from life” highlighting the book *March* by Geraldine Brooks.
- The Library was sad to see Judith Gray retire as Head of Reference after 23 years of service, but wish her every happiness during retirement. We are pleased that Judith has elected to continue working some part-time hours at the reference desk.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Collection use

The Department served more than 1,600 on-site visitors this year (an increase of 100+), answered a steady stream of inquiries by phone and e-mail, and filled thirty-three photo orders. Use of the research room was particularly brisk in July, August, and October. Archival and manuscript material in the Vault Collection constituted the single most heavily consulted category of holdings.

Programming and outreach

Special Collections Staff (Curator Leslie Wilson, Staff Assistant Conni Manoli-Skocay, and Technical Associate Bob Hall) engaged in a variety of programming and outreach activities. We delivered presentations for many groups, classes, and organizations: "Concord Reads;" Ladies' Tuesday Club; Concord-Carlisle Adult and Community Education; Concord Guides; Teaching American History (a teachers' program funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education); Thoreau Society Annual Gathering; Hosmer family reunion; Barrett family reunion; Four Rivers Charter School (Greenfield); Simmons College Internship Fair; Concord Public Schools (Susan Erickson's fourth graders at the Thoreau Elementary School); Concord Academy; Fenn School; Winsor School (Boston); Brown University; Quinsigamond Community College; Middlesex Community College; University of Massachusetts (Lowell); and four groups of community college teachers from across the country in seminars funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (two groups on the lyceum movement, two groups on antislavery and reform). We mounted one major exhibition ("Collecting Transcendentalism"), planned four lectures (by Joel Myerson, David Wood, Mark Stirling, and Leslie Morris) to accompany it, and installed several smaller exhibitions at 129 Main Street and the Fowler Branch. We also contributed to the Concord Historical Collaborative series on slavery and antislavery in Concord and collaborated with the Concord Museum on its Civil War exhibition. Web outreach included the mounting of digitized Concord newspapers up to the Civil War, the digitization of the products (audio and transcript) of the Concord Oral History Project (in progress), and the preparation (also in progress) of an online version of the gallery display "Collecting Transcendentalism."

Cataloging and online finding aids

Staff and interns made significant inroads into the backlog of unprocessed and uncataloged holdings of all types. Of particular importance: the detailed processing and preparation of a full finding aid for the extensive Nathan Brooks papers, mounted at <http://www.concordlibrary.org/brooks.html>. Bob Hall completed a pilot cataloging project with the Minuteman Library Network and is now able to enter online cataloging records directly into the MLN data base.

Acquisitions

The collections have been enriched through both gift and purchase. Among the gifts received: the papers of late Concord resident Joanne Loynd; Richardson family papers from scholar and author Robert Dale Richardson; a Grapevine Cottage scrapbook from Deborah Oney; Barrett family papers from Meliscent Gill; Concord Band archives; and Keyes family papers from Jonathan and Judy Keyes. Notable purchases: three Ellen Emerson letters; an 1835 letter describing the bicentennial celebration of Concord's incorporation; a letter from Theodore Parker to Ralph Waldo Emerson; and a nineteenth-century painting of Thoreau's Walden cabin (cleaned and reframed in its original carved wooden frame following purchase).

Policy discussions

Library Director Kerry Cronin, Curator Leslie Wilson, and three Library Corporation Trustees participated in monthly Special Collections Committee meetings to review policy matters relating to departmental holdings.

TECHNICAL SERVICES/TECHNOLOGY

The Tech Services/Technology Department enjoyed another busy and productive year. New hires Diane Bosco (End Processor) and Danielle Hubing (Technical Services Assistant) filled departmental vacancies. Sang Park, a former End Processor, was promoted to Technical Services Assistant.

- The Department worked with vendors to install and implement new technology at the renovated Fowler Branch Library. The new Fowler has its own fast and free wireless Internet access for the public, 5 adult Internet PCs, 2 children's PCs and 2 YA computer stations (including a Mac) and several online catalog-only PCs in the building. Public print management and PC reservation systems were also installed on Fowler PCs

along with MS Office 2010 applications.

- The Department played a key role in several library-wide initiatives – a key card access management system at the Main Library and preparations for the implementation of RFID, OverDrive downloadable eBooks and audio books, training demos for staff and the public, library web page development and online publications.
- The Minuteman Library Network selected the Concord Free Public Library Department to participate in a pilot project using our book vendor's online database for ordering in the hopes of expediting the book ordering process. The pilot project was successful and more Minuteman libraries will now adopt the new program.
- Our Book Conservator has trained numerous local high school students/volunteers to perform book repairs ranging from simple to the somewhat complex.
- We want to express our profound gratitude to all of our former and current high school students and adult volunteers for their talent, dedication and tireless work.

FRIENDS OF THE CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Claire Greene, President
Stephan & Faith Bader, Co-Treasurers
Karen Brown, Clerk and Fowler Liaison
Jacqueline Barnard, Film Series
Stefanie Cloutier, Publicity
Edith & Kenneth Hetling, Book Sales
Christine Lamb, Publicity
John Lynch and Janet Kaminstein, Book Sorters Liaisons
E. Glenn Mitchell, Adult Programs
Jane Torpie, Membership
Dianne Weiss, Film Series
Kerry Cronin, Library Liaison

The Friends of the Concord Free Public Library, a non-profit volunteer organization, supports the Library and promotes its vital role in our community.

The Friends sponsored Tour of Concord Libraries raised \$15,000 for e-readers and training for patrons and staff members to use databases and e-readers. 435 lucky ticket holders toured seven private libraries in Concord. Book mavens gawked at one resident's Pulitzer Prize, compared notes on favorite books, admired beloved books, exclaimed over shared tastes.

With more than 1,000 members and volunteers, the Friends fund library materials, performances and programs not otherwise provided for in the Library budget. Some highlights from 2011 follow.

Thursday author series



Ken Gloss, a renowned appraiser of books, spoke at the 2011 Thursday author series.

Also speaking in 2011: Concord resident and Brandeis economics professor Catherine Mann, NYT best-selling author Julia Glass and foreign war correspondent Anna Badkhen on her book, "Candy-wrapped Kalashnikovs and other war stories."

Music from the library

All four free concerts "sold out" very quickly and attracted a diverse audience. Each concert was extraordinary and all of the performers loved the performance space and the attentiveness of the audience.

Weekend poetry

The Weekend Poetry Series continued with its strong showing of quality poets, beginning with Joanna Klink in January, Betsy Sholl, the Poet Laureate of Maine, in February, followed by Moira Linehan and Mary Pinard in April and acclaimed poet Tony Hoagland in May.

A memorial reading in honor of poet June Beisch was held in August. Bill Coyle and Lisa Olstein read in November. December brought the lighter side of poetry with the group XJ Kennedy and the Light Brigade, performing their humorous poems.

Friday Flicks

The 2011 Friday Flicks temporarily relocated to the Main Library while renovations were completed at the Fowler Library. The well-attended film series included: *The Song of Sparrows* (Iran, 2008); *Floating Weeds* (Japan, 1959); and *Broken Wings* (Israel, 2002). A highlight was 7 Solos with a special appearance by featured musician, Wayne Hankin.