

educate the public with respect to the activity and mission of the Tax Relief Committee. As of December 31, 2012, the preliminary and early results of the 2012-2013, solicitation were 260 donations totaling \$52,706. Gifts for the current campaign will continue to be received through June 30, 2013.

The members of the Tax Relief Committee heartily thank all the citizens of Concord who have generously offered financial assistance to help enable our neighbors in need to meet their property tax obligations. We welcome input and ideas from the public which would enhance our collective efforts, and we encourage the public to spread the word regarding the work and activity of the Tax Relief Committee. The Committee deeply appreciates the support of the Selectmen's Office and their capable staff in facilitating the work of our committee and the implementation of our solicitation. It is our great privilege to serve the citizens of Concord.

## CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Kitsy Rothermel, Chair  
Matt Boger  
Paul Dewey  
Heather Peachey  
Melissa Saalfield  
Sandy Shen  
Bob Sekuler.

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.

The Library Committee consists of seven members appointed by the Selectmen for the purpose of:

- Providing policy guidance to the Library Director
- Recommending policy and organizational methods to the Selectmen
- Serving as liaison between the Library and the Trustees of the Library Corporation, governmental units, and private groups that relate to Library services.

Throughout 2012, the Library Committee has had opportunities to hear from a number of department heads, broadening the Committee's understanding of the many

things that take place at the CFPL. Karen Ahearn enthusiastically shared, both in words and photographs, the many projects and activities involving our children. Robin Demas, head of Circulation, both in February and later in December, described the challenges and the excitement of the upcoming RFID implementation. The need to tag every item in the collection, as well as every item coming in, has meant inordinate volunteer hours, but the time for implementation is near. Many thanks to the Town of Concord for supporting such an exciting project at Town Meeting 2011.

Pat Pluskal talked about the enthusiasm with which the community has embraced the newly renovated Fowler Library and the many varied uses it now has. Leslie Perrin Wilson gave the Committee a personalized tour of the agriculture exhibit, "This Garden Spot of Concord", followed by a visit to Special Collections where she spoke about its history and current use. Deborah Ervin, the new Assistant Director, was welcomed at an ice cream social in August and then was the October guest at the Library Committee meeting. Deb will be working with reference in particular, as well as helping to expand programming and assist with team building. An annual visit from Robin Cicchetti, Head Librarian at CCHS, described the CCHS Learning Commons, which makes available online tools, platforms and databases to support student learning.

One challenge facing the Library Committee this year was the announcement by the CFPL staff that they were forming a union. While this was an institutional change, it has not affected the excellent service and patron interaction that the staff provides. The Committee has worked hard to respect the needs of the staff and to be supportive in any way it can. Town Manager Chris Whelan met with the Committee in January and in March to share the status of the unionization process.

Tony Logalbo, Town Treasurer, has been working with the library on the implementation of computerized cash registers to collect and tally payables at both libraries. At a fall Library Committee meeting, he met with the Committee to describe the benefits of this more structured process of dealing with incoming moneys. This process is in common use in a number of other libraries and is moving forward here.

The Library Committee adopted goals for 2013, following very closely on those of previous years. Highlights of 2012 include a 3.9% overall increase in circulation at the Concord Free Public Library, with particular increases in ebooks and audio books. Clearly, technology is moving forward. The Committee modified its Kindle policy to allow use by those under 18, and we anticipate continuing to look at new technologies and how they best relate to libraries.

The extraordinary pace of new technology poses exciting challenges and extraordinary opportunities for the Concord Free Public Library. Working together, the Director, the Library Committee, and the Staff hope to move smoothly forward as changes take place. The Library Committee invites any interested person or observer to attend its monthly meetings, held the second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm in the Main Library. Patrons are also encouraged to visit the library website: [www.concordlibrary.org](http://www.concordlibrary.org) and sign up for the library e-newsletter.

## **CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION**

Kerry Cronin,  
Library Director

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The Concord Free Public Library enjoyed another successful year with a 3.9% increase in circulation and a number of exemplary programmatic collaborations with area institutions. Among these were the Special Collections' exhibit, "This Garden Spot of Concord, Mass." which was timed to coincide with an agricultural exhibit at the Concord Museum, as well as the annual Concord Reads series with lectures and discussions delivered on related topics. Another exciting initiative is the planning for a seed lending library in partnership with Concord CAN and area farms. It was an honor to host a continuous reading of Little Women in celebration of the centennial anniversary of Orchard House as a museum and it was so engaging to hear Louisa May Alcott's words read aloud by residents of all ages. We were delighted to work with Emerson Umbrella to offer art lectures in the library's art gallery to seniors via our relationship with the Council on Aging. The Concord

Conservatory of Music has also greatly enhanced our children's programming by offering an extremely popular series for the preschool audience on pre-reading skills related to rhythm and rhyme at both library locations.

Throughout 2012, library colleagues and volunteers have spent numerous hours tagging all materials in the Library's collections in preparation for the implementation of RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology, which will streamline the circulation and collection maintenance processes. A special thanks to Robin Demas, our Circulation Supervisor and team lead, who has done a terrific job planning for this new service and to all of the many volunteers who have contributed countless hours to support the library by tagging the collection for this service.

Based on the creativity and commitment of our Teen Advisory Board and planning team, comprised of both staff members and volunteers, we were able to deliver enhanced services to area teens including: afternoon films, an evening film for young children with their teen babysitters, the acquisition of new eBooks and audiobooks to support the curricular and personal interests of high schools students, the continuation of the CCHS student study day twice a year when the library remains open from 10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. the Sunday before exams, and a special evening of games, movie, costumes, and refreshments related to the Hunger Games to which 65 students attended at the Fowler Branch on a Friday night in September.

The Library was pleased to Welcome Deborah Ervin as its new Assistant Library Director in August. Filling this position has been a long-term organizational goal planned over the past decade. After a national search, Deb Ervin was selected from among 33 applicants, and brings a wealth of experience in public libraries and reference services to the position. Another noteworthy personnel change was the retirement of Ann Comer, Circulation Assistant, after more than 26 years of service to the Concord community. We are very grateful to Ann for her contributions and wish her an enjoyable retirement.

Downloadable eBooks and audiobooks are an area of substantial growth for libraries with a 104% increase in the number of available titles through the Minuteman