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Library Usage - Highlights

- Library patrons borrowed 558,777 items this year. **1st** best circulation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts -**2nd year in a row**. Behind only: Boston, Newton, Cambridge, Brookline, Worcester, Lexington, Quincy, Arlington, Wellesley, and Watertown.
- Ranked 4th in the state for circulation per open hour and 20th in the state for non-resident circulation
- 1,168 individuals signed up for library cards, bringing the number of cardholders to 16,143 - more than 63% of our residents!
- **14%** increase in electronic media. Library patrons downloaded 41,790 ebooks, audiobooks, movies, and music selections
- 18,198 children, teens, and adults attended 618 concerts, story times, book clubs, hands-on workshops, and other library programs
- **30%** increase in reference questions answered by Children's Librarians for a new total of 5,912
- Reference Librarians answered 37,682 reference questions
- **20,814** people attended **811** meetings held at the Library
- Enhanced marketing efforts to increase awareness of library programs and services – launched new logo for the library and made continued improvements in website
- Museum passes funded once again by the Friends of the Belmont Public Library provided **2,493** free or discounted visits to area museums for families and individuals
- Great support again this year from our volunteers. 31 individuals provided **1,521 hours** to support library programs and services, including high school students fulfilling their community service requirement

Staffing

This year was marked by several key staff transitions in our Children's, Reference, and Young Adult departments.

We welcomed Rachel Moir as our new Young Adult Librarian. Moir worked previously at the Ann Arbor Public Library as a Public Library Associate in IT, and at the Worcester Public Library as their teen librarian.

Chris Tremblay also joined our Reference Department. Chris worked at the Abbot Public Library in Marblehead for over 7 years, working his way up from part-time Library Assistant to Adult Services Librarian. He is known for his dedication to customer service.

Our former Coordinator of Children's Services Liz Fraser moved out of state, and long-time Children's Librarian Deborah Borsuk was promoted to be the new Coordinator. Deborah has been a part of the Belmont Library's staff for nine years, both as a former Young Adult Librarian and the Children's Librarian.

Rachel Overbeck, a recent library school graduate, was hired to fill the Children's Librarian role which Deborah left behind. Rachel is originally from Nebraska and previously worked as an intern for the Coolidge Corner Branch of the Brookline Public Library and in the Brookline Public Schools. Additional funding also allowed the Children's Room to add 4 hours to an existing part-time Children's Librarian position.

The Library also added new part time staff to the Circulation and Reference Department to replace others who have moved on.

Adult Services

Expanding Digital Services

In line with national trends, usage of ebooks and e-audiobooks continued to grow. Downloads of ebooks and audiobooks through Overdrive, a catalog shared by the entire Minuteman Library Network, grew 12% from 29,907 checkouts in 2016 to 33,579 in 2017. The increase was fueled, in part, by the introduction of the new "Libby" app, which makes downloading books to smartphones and other devices much easier than in the past.

Downloads from Hoopla, an additional database for checking out ebooks, audiobooks, movies, music, comics, TV shows, and videos, increased 31%, from 6,545 to 8603 in 2017. Unlike most of our database subscriptions, Hoopla charges per download rather than setting a fixed subscription fee per year. As usage grows, so does our price. To keep our Hoopla affordable and still provide services to the largest number of patrons possible, we have reduced the number of check-outs per month per cardholder from 6 to 5. Since we signed on with Hoopla, 1,192 Belmont patrons have used it to download materials, including 421 new users in 2017.

Usage of databases continued to be strong, particularly for Consumer Reports (12,495 page views last year alone), business and investment databases (Morningstar Investment Research Center and the Wall Street Journal), and genealogy (Ancestry Library Edition and Heritage Quest).

The Lynda.com database, which offers hundreds of video courses on topics from LinkedIn to web design to marketing and branding, proved especially popular. Usage grew by 40% in the second year of our subscription, with 3,476 videos viewed in 2016 and 4,885 videos viewed in 2017.

Following up on patron's strong interest in investment research, the Library signed up on November to a 6-month trial of Weiss Financial Ratings. Patrons will be surveyed to determine which of the financial databases they like the best and would like the Library to retain (Morningstar, ValueLine, and Weiss). These resources differ in coverage, buy and sell recommendations, and how interactive and customizable they are.

Additional Roku & Introducing Kindle Fire Tablets

The number of Roku, streaming video devices featuring library Netflix subscriptions, doubled from four to eight. Even with this increase, the Roku are constantly circulating.

In December the Friends of the Library provided funding to purchase six Kindle Fire HD 10" tablets. These circulate with a variety of cookbooks chosen for their popularity and local appeal. For added interest, a number of podcasts have been included on the tablets, ranging from book to food to general interest.

Technology Related Instruction

Over the course of the year, reference librarians offered several workshops to introduce patrons to our databases and offer insight into how best to use them. Reference librarian Nancy McColm offered a workshop at the Beech Street Center in collaboration with the Council on Aging, providing an overview of the investment databases mentioned above. At the library, she presented an overview of the online genealogy resources available through the library website (Ancestry.com, HeritageQuest, and American Ancestors), focusing on search tips and types of genealogical records found in each. To follow up, genealogist Richard Reid was invited to present a workshop on "The Newest Irish Research Records."

Usage of electronic resources was also encouraged with two "pop-up" library events where patrons could enjoy hot cocoa and cookies while watching a one-on-one demonstration of a resource. In January, McColm set up a laptop in the lobby and explained how to take video courses on Lynda.com. In May, she showed patrons how to read magazines online, using the library's subscription to RBDigital magazines (formerly known as Zinio).

After two pilot sessions in the spring, 3D printing workshops led by 3D printing expert John Walsh, became a monthly program in the fall. More than 50 library patrons of all ages were introduced to the history and design basics of 3D printing, then had the option of having one of their creations printed out after the class. Going forward, we will continue with these monthly sessions with the plan to move printing in-house once the library acquires its own 3D printer in 2018.

Also continuing with a mainstay of our technology program, the 30-minute One-on-One Tech Help sessions for patrons needing assistance with new devices and library e-resources. Increasingly, with more tech-savvy staffers available, appointments usually are not necessary, and patrons are able to get walk-in help.

Self-Service Circulation Kiosks

Two Biblioteca selfCheck systems were added to the adult circulation department, simplifying the check-out process for library users. These units are live with Sierra, the integrated library system used by Minuteman. Patrons can check out, and renew items; view their account info, including currently checked out items, holds and account balances. It is also now possible to pay any fines by credit card using the Comprise Smart Terminal Secure Card Reader, which maintains PCI compliance for secure credit card transactions. In order to offer this capability, a third separate computer network was established within the library dedicated to the Comprise Terminals in children's and adult services.

New Technology from the Reference Room Renovation:

In the reference room, public internet stations were upgraded to cat6 wiring, capable of handling higher speeds than the cat5e cabling present in the rest of the library. This is the current future-proof standard used in other town buildings, and although it was not possible to extend this capability to other public or staff machines, this improvement has been noted by patrons in increased internet speeds and reliability.

A more visibly noticeable change was the replacement of outdated 17" monitors with new Dell 24" screens.

One very popular new feature of the reference room is the Velocity charging station, consisting of eight circulating power packs, capable of charging both android and lightning connected iPhones. These devices are individually charged at the central station, and are then able to portably charge patron devices, making this a welcomed convenience for patrons. Depending on battery capacity, phones can be fully charged within an hour of usage. These updates were all funded by the Friends of The Belmont Public Library.

Laptops that were used to accommodate computing needs during the renovation of the Reference room, continue to be available offering patrons the opportunity to choose a comfortable, more private work space within the library.

Programs for Education and Entertainment

The Library hosted a total 3,371 Belmontonians at 186 adult programs in 2017, a 170% increase over the previous year, and the topics addressed were more timely and exciting than ever.

One of the high points was an Eclipse Viewing Party on Aug. 21, attended by over 300 people. Belmont residents of all ages stood on the steps of the library and lined up along Concord Avenue to watch the partial solar eclipse, wearing eclipse glasses provided by the library. Eclipse glasses also were purchased and given out in advance of the event to people planning to watch the event safely on their own.

Another major event was the Night of the Living Library Halloween Party, which featured three library departments (Children's, Young Adult, and Adult) working together to provide activities for the whole family. The Reference Department maintained order at the cookie decorating table, Young Adult librarian Rachel Moir organized a *Zombie Apocalypse* escape room activity for teens, and the Children's Department provided a spooky story time and a variety of arts and crafts activities (see Children's and Young Adult reports).

This was just one event of a whole summer full of family programs organized collaboratively by the reference and children's department, featuring alternating programs of movies, games, and crafts every Thursday night.

Other notable programs included an April presentation on fake news, with Assistant Professor Laura Saunders and Lecturer Rachel Gans-Boriskin, both of Simmons, discussing the history of fake news and giving tips for evaluating the accuracy and impartiality of news sources and stories. Also in April, National Poetry Month was celebrated with a reading by seven Belmont poets, including Steph Burt and Wendy Drexler; a poetry nature walk; and discussions of the poems of Denise Levertov, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Robert Frost.

The popular creative writing classes with published author and teacher Lynette Benton continued and were expanded to also include a class on persuasive writing and speaking. Participation in the class led some students who suffered from fear of presentations to gain enough confidence in their abilities to present their original writing publicly.

The Library also completed another well-attended Friends Music Series season, featuring classical piano, folk, love songs from 1895 to 1960, and works of female singer/songwriters across several continents, presented by Women in World Jazz. Other ongoing programs included monthly Tai Chi classes, offered once a month on Saturday morning by Tai Chi coach and practitioner Aisling O'Shea, and occasional crafts/cooking programs with projects like making your own ice cream and making pysanky, Ukrainian decorated eggs. Two different programs on cyber security with tips for protecting yourself online were presented in the fall, and may signal the start of a series of "fireside chats" on technology issues presented by local experts.

Book Discussion Groups and New Clubs

The Library offered another successful year of the Books and Bites program. Belmont author Susan Rubin Suleiman spoke on her book *The Nemirovsky Question: The Life, Death, and Legacy of a Jewish Writer in Twentieth-Century France*. Author Virginia Pye spoke on her novel *Dreams of the Red Phoenix*. Author Jay Atkinson spoke on his book *Massacre on the Merrimack: Hannah Duston's Captivity and Revenge in Colonial America*. Belmont author Wendy Drexler spoke on her book of poems *Before There Was Before*. Author Laura Harrington spoke on her novel *A Catalog of Birds*.

One of the Books and Bites programs featured a talk by Reference Librarian Miriam MacNair on the life and work of poet Denise Levertov, focusing on *The Collected Poems of Denise Levertov* and on two biographies--*Denise Levertov: A Poet's Life* by Dana Greene and *A Poet's Revolution: The Life of Denise Levertov* by Donna Krolak Hollenberg.

The Library's two long-standing book discussion groups continued to inspire lively debate and thoughtful conversations. The bimonthly Belmont Book Group, led by Reference Librarian Nancy McColm, focused on current literary fiction; and the senior discussion group, led by reference librarian Miriam MacNair and co-sponsored by the Library and the Council on Aging, read classics.

Two new clubs have come together, giving patrons the opportunity to explore different interests. While they are called "clubs," everyone is welcome to drop in and give them a try - no registration necessary. One of the clubs is called Dial M for Movies hosted by our Library Director Peter Struzziero - a self described film buff. Patrons have been attending two meetings per month since last fall, the first to view a film at the Library with popcorn and other snacks, the second to come back and discuss it.

The new Knitting Club meets weekly on Friday and is led by Belmont resident Jocelyn Milton, who offers informal instruction and a chance to get to know fellow crafters. Beginner and experienced knitters alike are invited to bring needles and yarn and join in the fun.

Collaboration with Community Partners

The library worked with community partners to respond to local and world events. In February the library collaborated with Belmont World Film, Beth El Temple Center, and the First Unitarian Church of Belmont to organize "A Community Responds: Three Films on the Global Refugee Crisis." Two films screened at the West Newton Cinema and one in the Library Assembly Room, highlighting the refugee experience in Iran, Syria, and Mexico, attracted a total of 350 people. Proceeds from ticket sales benefited two local refugee assistance non-profits. Belmont Against Racism, the Belmont Religious Council, the Human Rights Commission, and The Dorothy and Charles Mosesian center for the Arts also co-sponsored.

The library added a third conversation circle for new adult English language learners. In September, attendance at the Monday morning group was high enough to warrant splitting into two groups, one at a high beginner level and the other low intermediate. A Wednesday night group is also offered for those who work

during the day. Participants come from all over the globe, including Spain, Bulgaria, Syria, Russia, China, and Japan. The conversation groups are led by volunteers Moira Lucey, Maureen Trainor, and Natalie Stoller.

Following the success of a pizza lunch “Meet and Greet” for new and old neighbors last year, the Library partnered with the Belmont Public Schools and Belmont Against Racism to host an International Valentine’s Day party in the library Assembly Room. The event was intended to welcome new families to Belmont and introduce them to Valentine’s Day customs, practiced mostly in the US but also around the world. Children decorated valentines intended for their families, classmates, or selected groups of veterans, senior citizens, and immigrants. The Library, the Schools, and BAR hope to make this event an annual occurrence.

Library staff members also participated in a variety of Town events, including Town Day, Meet Belmont, and the Foundation for Belmont Education Spelling Bee. Throughout the summer, Community Services Librarian Mary Carter and other Library staff members set up a table at the Belmont Farmers Market, where shoppers could find out about upcoming library programs, check out a cookbook or bestseller, enter a contest, or chat with a librarian.

Belmont Veterans Agent Robert Upton acted as Master of Ceremonies at our 2nd annual Purple Heart Ceremony that saw over 80 attendees come to see the Library to honor veterans and family members. This ceremony will now take place each year on August 7th, the national day of recognition for Purple Heart recipients.

This year the library paired with a number of local organizations to offer an informative program on LGBT Homelessness in Boston. The program brought in 50 attendees and was co-sponsored by Belmont Against Racism, Belmont Gay-Straight Alliance Committee, Belmont Human Rights Commission, Boston Institute for Non-Profit Journalism, The First Church in Belmont, and the Stand Up Campaign.

The Community Service Club, a joint effort between the children’s and young adult departments, continued in 2017, giving middle school students a chance to work on volunteer projects for the library.

Professional Development

Library staff continued to update their skills and knowledge of trends in library science. Staff attended a variety of webinars and workshop. Staff attended workshops which covered topics including explaining new procedures for interlibrary loan through the regional Commonwealth Catalog; ways to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the collection; media literacy and evaluating news and news sources; and reader’s advisory, highlighting books to recommend to patrons including Carnegie Medal winners, mysteries, crime fiction, and reading group picks.

Other webinars offered training on how best to use electronic resources that we currently offer patrons (LexisNexis, Weiss Financial Ratings, Social Law Library databases), including the recently digitized collection of Belmont newspapers dating back to the 1890s. At a workshop called “Disabilities Essentials in Your Library,” staff member Chris Tremblay learned about a caption and description editing tool (CADET) that is available now free, having been developed by the National Center for Accessible Media at WGBH through a grant from the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office. Chris can use CADET to add captions to any videos the Library might create, and also create audio tracks for the vision impaired.

Coordinator of Adult Services Emily Reardon and Community Services Librarian Mary Carter attended, respectively, an MLS conference on “Talking Social Justice in Massachusetts Libraries: Diversity to Equity” and the NELA Diversity Summit, both full-day conferences addressing diversity in hiring, workplace culture, programming, collection development, and more. Librarians also attended the Annual Conference of the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium (NERGC) and the annual Digital Commonwealth Conference, which included a session on “fake news” that inspired the program for Belmont patrons.

Technology Librarian Ellen Girouard served first as vice-chair, then chair, of the MLN Key Users Interest Group, and other staff members attended Minuteman Library Network meetings for reference, young adult, and program planning.

Library Department Heads and Administration also participated in the Massachusetts Public Library Annual Conference, and Library Director Peter Struzziero represented Belmont at the American Library Association Conference in Chicago.

Young Adults

The attendance for teen programs held strong at 1,370 participants this year, despite having no teen librarian for four months during the middle of the year.

Our programs offered include a number of enrichment and support programs. The Homework and Hot Chocolate program provides middle schoolers with the space to do their homework at the library and then relax with snacks, games and crafts, has continued to have strong participation. Finals Snack and Study provides a similar space for older teens to hit the books in preparation for their exams. To help teens interested in pursuing higher education, the library invited back counselors from Collegewise of Newton to present a program on college admission essay writing.

Teens were also free to explore other interests at the library with a wide variety of entertaining programs with focuses outside the purview of scholarship. The library again offered a Babysitting Workshop to assist teens in learning the skills they need to be safe and effective entrepreneurs in taking care of children. The loyal Anime and Art Clubs both continued to meet at the library, bringing together teens with shared hobbies. Family Game Night provided intergenerational bonding opportunities for teens and their families. The library also held several successful teen parties, including those for Valentine's Day, Halloween, and the end of the Summer Reading program; the Henna Tattoo Party was especially well attended, bringing in 65 teens. As part of the library's Halloween party, the teens took part in the library's first Escape Room, which required the teens to work together to decipher a series of clues while racing against the clock. This program reached its max capacity of 40 attendees, with a wait list, and several teens have requested that the library put on similar programs in the future.

Even without a teen librarian to guide them through the Summer Reading Program, Belmont teens exhibited enthusiasm for it, with 95 teens signing up. Those teens were entered into a drawing for a pair of Red Sox tickets. 40 teens took part in our trivia contests and teens also completed 35 book reviews as part of the program. Scratch tickets made a return as a reward for participating teens, allowing those who reached their reading goals to win free coupons to Shake Shack and J.P. Licks, as well as various gift cards. The program culminated in an end of the year Summer Reading party.

STEM programming

In 2017, Belmont Public Library maintained its commitment to successful STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programming. The library hosted two more seasons of its chapter of Girls Who Code, a national organization dedicated to providing girls with the skills and the confidence required to pursue future careers in technological fields. The club served 35 girls in grades six to twelve, providing them with a framework and mentorship in learning coding. Students in 2017 focused especially on Scratch, a visual programming language developed by MIT, and web development by way of HTML, CSS style sheets, and Javascript.

The library also offered several programs in the computer programming language of Python. Two sessions of a four-week long class, one for middle school students and one for high schoolers, gave Belmont young

adults the opportunity to dig into the concepts underpinning Python coding. Teacher Robyn Allen, a MIT grad with 15 years of experience mentoring engineering and coding students, guided students in a rigorous and rewarding curriculum. Students were also invited to join other intrepid coders at our three hour long Saturday Hackathon and Python Workshops, which challenged participants' problem solving capabilities as well as their coding prowess. Students were given instruction on certain coding principles and techniques, then given a specific problem to solve by coding a program to do the necessary tasks.

Other Teen Initiatives

The Teen Advisory Board, or TAB, is now in its third year, and has brought in many new members. The current membership, consisting of 14 teens, has jumped right back into helping shape teen library offerings after its brief hiatus. The board, which meet monthly, helped plan programs and worked on volunteer projects, including helping to gather information to assist in future rearrangements of the teen space.

The new teen librarian is working to revamp the structure of the volunteering program for teenagers and the new program will launch in the coming months. The focus will be for teens to help organize the Young Adult room on the main floor, and help to plan programs as part of the Teen Advisory Board.

The entirety of the young adult collection was weeded and expanded over the course of the year. The young adult kindles received a redesign to make the cases more appealing to young people. The readers advisory list available on the website was expanded, and the new books page of the teen site improved to better reflect new items added to the collection.

Additionally, our new Young Adult Librarian Rachel Moir attended the Teen Library Summit held yearly by Massachusetts Library System, where she learned from presentations on teen mental health, working with teens to create safe spaces with collaborative behavior policies, and teens and civic engagement. She is slated to also take part in a youth mental health first aid training certification in early 2018.

Jane Gray Dustan Children's Room

In 2017, the Jane Gray Dustan Children's Room continued its successful programs and partnerships, and expanded community relationships. 324 library programs were able to reach 13,075 children and caregivers, and 5,912 reference questions were answered, a 30% increase from 2016.

Outreach

The Children's Librarians held 31 off-site programs, reaching 1,023 children and caregivers. The librarians continued visiting four Belmont preschools (Waverley Square Daycare, Wonder School, Little Sprouts Belmont, and Adventures Preschool). They also participated in Belmont elementary school events, from Library Night at Butler Elementary School to International Walk to School Day at Wellington Elementary School. Children's Room staff was delighted to receive class visits from Butler Elementary second graders and Wellington Elementary third graders.

Over the summer, librarians continued their successful weekly storytimes at the Belmont Farmers' Market. They also returned to the second annual Literacy on the Lawn event held by the Belmont Woman's Club and presented STEAM stories and activities at a visit to the Belmont Summer Enrichment camp at Chenery Middle School.

Summer Reading

Nearly 700 children signed up for the 2017 summer reading program. The theme of the program was *Build a Better World*, and inspired a community service connection for the first time through a summer food drive to help the Belmont Food Pantry. A new math element was added to the program; each child who came to the Children's Room was encouraged to add a Lego block piece to a large container each time they visited. Over 100 children used estimation to guess how many visitors the Children's Room had over the summer based on the number of Legos in the container. The three children who had the closest guess won gift cards to local Belmont businesses. Children once again set their own reading goals for the summer and, when they reached their goal, chose a book as a prize. Pre-readers completed early literacy skill-building activities and also selected a book as a prize when they finished. The prizes were generously funded by the Friends of the Library.

Summer programming kicked off with a concert from children's rock star Vanessa Trien and ended with a wonderful collection of fairy tales performed by Sparky's Puppets. In the middle were a variety of activities, concerts, and performances including a reptile show from the Museum of Science, and magic shows from Awesome Robb and Jungle Jim. For the first time, staff added a new line-up of workshops for elementary aged children including Balloon Sculpting from magician Ed Popielarczyk, Creating a Calder inspired sculpture from the Pop-Up Art School, and Beginning Birding from Hands on Nature.

Programs for Parents

This year the Children's Room expanded program offerings for parents of young children. The spring brought the library's second Early Childhood Information Fair, held at the Beech Street Center, which continued to be a success. Over 140 people were able to meet with directors and teachers from 18 preschools and day cares.

Through the library's continued participation in the Watertown/Belmont Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant program, the library offered evening parenting workshops presented by speech and language pathologist Megan Olowinski, on topics including "Speech and Language Development" and "Getting Ready for Reading and Writing." In June, Sheryl White of Baby Kneads led three well attended workshops on infant massage, sign language, and mindfulness for children.

Serving Children from Birth to 5 Years Old

The library continued its popular storytime offerings for ages zero to five and experienced a large rate of attendance once again.

The CFCE grant continues to provide weekly Literacy Playgroups at the Library, which grew in popularity throughout the year. Through the grant, an educator teaches sign language during our weekly librarian-led baby storytimes. The grant educators were also able to offer ten STEAM and Storytime(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) playgroups during the summer. The program was an extraordinary success, with a total summer attendance of 635 children and caregivers coming to craft, try simple experiments, sing, and play.

The Jane Gray Dustan Trust continues to fund a variety of programs for young children, including monthly infant-toddler sing-alongs with Matt Heaton, music and movement classes with Belmont resident Rubi Lichauco, and the Musical Storytime series by Powers Music School.

Serving School Age Children

The Children's Room continued offering a variety of programming for school aged children including Yoga, fencing demonstrations from the Olympia Fencing Center, STEAM programs with the Duct Tape Network, and robotics with the library's Lego WeDo kits. Our monthly Parent-Child Book Club continued to be in high demand, and students from Chenery Middle School had a chance to earn community service credit from both the Community Service Club, run in partnership with the Young Adult Librarian, and the Book Buddies program. An early release program for grades K through 4 from Hands on Nature was highly attended, inspiring an effort to create more early release programs in 2018.

Vacation week programs had excellent attendance and included visits from Science Tellers, a program from award winning mime Robert Rivest, and a visit from the extraordinary animals of Creature Teachers.

Intergenerational Programming

The Children's Librarians worked with the Teen Librarian and Reference Librarians to continue offering intergenerational programs. For "Library Lovers" month in February, the Library held a contest encouraging patrons to tell about a book they read to be entered into a raffle for a Kindle Fire or gift cards to local businesses. The library departments came together for a Halloween program that included a spooky storytime, cookie decorating, and crafts.

The Children's Librarians continued to partner with local organizations. We were happy to welcome Belmont Police Lieutenant Kristin Daley along with Officer Cory Taylor, and Grim, the Police Department's K-9, for a storytime and question session about what police officers and police dogs do. The Belmont Fire Department marked Fire Prevention week with a storytime from firefighter Ross Vona and a Touch a Fire Truck event. In support of the Belmont Gallery of Art's fall exhibit, *Home*, young artists came to the library's program with the Duct Tape Network to create their own sculptures of home, some of which went on display in the Gallery.

Friends of the Belmont Public Library

The Friends of the Belmont Public Library continued to provide strong support for the library in 2017, funding a range of programs and projects.

Program highlights: The Friends sponsored a wide array of library programs, supporting all ages and interests. The long running Music on Saturday and Author Series' brought a diverse group of performers. The authors mentioned earlier such as Laura Harrington, Jay Atkinson, Crystal King Susan Rubin Suleiman, Virginia Pye, Dick Lehr, and Daniel Golden to entertain and educate Belmont patrons were all sponsored by the Friends. Adults also benefited from a range of other programs including craft workshops, Tai Chi, and ESL classes. The Young Adult program was a focus this year, with the Friends sponsoring all YA programming including Homework & Hot Chocolate, Anime Club, and the Teen Advisory Board. Technology classes were funded for all ages, including Python programming, 3D printing, and computer aided design.

The Friends continued to fund the library's popular museum pass program. The museum pass program offers free and discount passes to 20 museums and parks. The Library circulated 2,493 museum passes this year.

Project Highlights: The major project funded in 2017 was the renovation of the reference room (mentioned below). The Friends also took on the exterior of the Library, spearheading a grounds cleanup and refresh,

installing 4 new planters. Huge thanks to the Belmont Garden Club for their invaluable help with this project. New Kindles were also purchased and put into circulation at the end of 2017.

Funding for the Friends comes from member donations and used book sale operations. Over 300 members and donors made generous contributions in support of the Belmont Public Library. The community also supports the Friends through thousands of donated books. The Library Friends Annual Book Sale in October was both a financial success and a fun community event. The Friends' Everyday Book Shop, located in the library near the circulation desk, continues to provide a great value for book shoppers as well as funds for library programs. In addition, the Friends were able to provide used books for a variety of other worth causes including materials for teacher libraries in Belmont schools and free books for patrons of the Belmont Food Pantry. The Friends also support the various Free Little Libraries across town whenever they are asked for a donation of books.

Belmont Public Library Foundation

The Belmont Library Foundation, a Massachusetts 501(c)(3) corporation, was formed originally to undertake promotional and fundraising activities for the Belmont Public Library, including construction of a new library. Now that Town Meeting has approved establishment of a building committee to develop a schematic design, the Foundation is preparing a major capital campaign to support fundraising efforts. To this end, the Foundation has been revitalized, with the election of a new board and slate of officers, and renewed collaborations with the Friends and the Trustees. Many thanks to Clair Colburn and Jeff Cronin, whose hard work enabled the Foundation to stay alive and be poised for the campaign ahead.

Notable Building Updates

In addition to the programming and staffing highlights shared above, it is important to note the targeted improvements made to the library facilities.

Key improvements made to the facility and grounds in 2017:

- A new boiler was installed in the Fall of 2017. It replaced the boiler installed in 1964 during original construction.
- As part of a town wide green communities grant, the insulation above the main floor east and west wings will be replaced. This project began in 4th quarter 2017 and is scheduled to conclude in 1st quarter 2018.
- Two self checkout machines were installed in the lobby area of the main floor.
- 11 security cameras were installed in various points throughout the building per the recommendation of the Belmont Police Department as Phase two of needed security updates
- Utilizing an anonymous donation, the Friends of the Library paid to refurbish the Adult Reference Room. The project included new paint, carpet, technology, electrical and all new furniture. We thank them and the donor for this new space which has been enjoyed by all.

- All public and staff rest rooms had a deep cleaning done with the Saniglaze process to return the tile to near it's original state. This helped the Library to avoid retiling costs, and is a process we will look to utilize annually or as needed.
- As mentioned in the Friends report new planters were added to the main entrances. In addition the Friends paid to have a grounds clean up which included a significant donation of time from Kelly Brothers Landscaping, a Belmont organization.
- A new cleaning company was brought in to improve the quality of cleanliness in the facility.

Administration

Library Director Peter Struzziero continues to guide the Library staff forward providing the best programming and services possible to the community. Peter completed his 1st contract with the town of Belmont after two years of service this year, and together we executed a new service contract that will take him to the spring of 2020.

As part of his goals set by the Board of Library Trustees Peter completed a 10 week course in Effective Leadership Development with Leadership Management International Inc.

Peter participated as a member of the Belmont Steering Committee on Community Education. The committee included membership from The Belmont Public Schools, Powers Music School, The Foundation for Belmont Education, The Belmont School Committee, Belmont Recreation Commission, Belmont Community Education, Belmont Recreation Division, Belmont Summer Enrichment Program, a Professor emeritus from Lesley University, and the owner of Get in Shape for Women in Cushing Square. Marsha Semuels acted as a consultant to manage this process and the writing of an extensive report; of which the goal is to promote successful Community Education program for Belmont.

Although the emphasis of this report is on the accomplishments and contributions of the Library in 2017, we continue to focus on the future of the library facility and services. 2018 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Belmont Public Library, and while we celebrate this achievement, we reflect on the future of Library services in Belmont.

In November 2017 Town Meeting Members voted overwhelmingly to support the formation of and funding for a building committee to develop a schematic design for a new building. In January, the Building Committee was appointed and has begun to carry out their charge. The work of the committee will continue throughout this calendar year. In parallel, the Library Foundation has begun their work in preparing a major capital campaign to support the Town's commitment to the Library.

As noted in this report, visits and utilization of the library services, programs and facility continue to experience strong growth. The Library has something for everyone. If you haven't been to the library lately, come down and see what it can offer to you!

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Keohane, Chair
Board of Library Trustees