



FRIENDS OF THE BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY

April 2020

Dear Friends,

We hope that your family is safe and establishing new routines for work, rest and recreation during these uncertain times. Please know that our Board of Directors is thinking of you and is grateful to you for your commitment and loyalty to the Library and to the Friends organization. We want to provide you an update on how your support of the Friends of the Belmont Public Library (FOBPL) is making a difference in the lives of Belmont residents.

THE PHYSICAL BUILDING IS CLOSED BUT THE LIBRARY WORKS HARD TO SERVE THE PUBLIC

Over the past few weeks our Library Director, Peter Struzziero and our Library staff have rapidly shifted gears in order to provide services to the public without use of the library building. They remain focused on serving the needs of our residents through a wealth of wonderful online resources and virtual programs. To quote Peter, “The Library work hasn’t slowed down despite this closure. The team has shifted resources towards providing new digital content in order to bring many of our services online.” This includes the nonfiction book club, Cookbook Club, Spanish language club, children’s storytimes and more, accessed through Zoom, Instagram and other social media.

The library staff are now publishing their “monthly” newsletter several times a month! If you aren’t already one of the nearly 2,000 newsletter subscribers, please sign up today by clicking this [link **https://belmontpubliclibrary.net/services/e-newsletter/**](https://belmontpubliclibrary.net/services/e-newsletter/) for all things library including FOBPL-supported programming. **Please share this link with friends and neighbors.**

FOBPL PARTNERS WITH LIBRARY DURING COVID-19 WITH LITERARY CARE PACKAGES

You may have read in the April 9, 2020 Belmont Citizen Herald, that giving the people of Belmont access to books is something Peter misses most about the library’s closure. The Friends of the Belmont Public Library continues to partner with the library to offer free, gently used books and DVDs curated on specific topics and for different ages. Each selection is

placed in a labeled paper bags so that residents can choose which literary care package interests them most. Trader Joe's in Fresh Pond and Star Market in Belmont donated the new paper bags.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FOBPL-SPONSORED PROGRAM IN BELMONT JOURNAL (March 13th)

While all events held at the Belmont Public Library have been cancelled during this pandemic, we want to share a 2-minute segment about the FOBPL-sponsored *Music on Saturdays Series* produced for the Belmont Journal. Komako Akai Whitelaw, a member of the FOBPL and a volunteer journalist, produced this short segment to showcase this very popular program as well as the vital role the Friends of the Belmont Public Library plays in ensuring a wide variety of enrichment programs and cross-cultural events. [Please click here](#) to view this March 13, 2020 video clip on YouTube.

BELMONT HELPS – NEW COMMUNITY RESOURCE DURING COVID-19

The FOBPL wants to share this new community resource, called Belmont Helps, to serve as a local resource for COVID-19 info. Click on the following link belmonthelps.org to receive assistance, to help through volunteering, or to financially support local COVID-19 needs. **Feel free to share this information with friends and neighbors.** All are welcome to be part of this collective effort.

In closing, we are sure you will share our pride in the accomplishments of the Belmont Public Library (**listed below**) which has the 11th highest circulating library in Massachusetts, even though our town is 73rd in population. The following page includes a list of little-known accomplishments achieved by our Director Peter Struzziero and our librarians, in service to our town. As you'll see Belmont loves and relies on its great library!

Thank you again, for making FOBPL-sponsored programming possible. Your generosity strengthens the mission of our library and the essential role it plays in providing access to all.

Stay safe and be well,

Elaine Westermarck & Marie Mabardi

Elaine Westermarck – 617-501-0359 cell, e_westermarck@msn.com

Marie Mabardi – 617-571-3213 cell, marie@ggatravel.com

[Donate now to help bring more great programming to the Library!](#)

Did you know?

Only a month ago, it was typical for 1,000 people to visit our library daily! They access books and periodicals, attend a meeting or event, participate in one of our enrichment programs, book or movie clubs or find a

quiet spot to work or study. We are proud of the role our Library plays in strengthening the Belmont community and we are grateful to you for your commitment to keep our Library thriving. Friends-supported events are highlighted in [blue](#).

Our Librarians...

- Service 16,049 borrowers, more than 60% of our town's population
- Lend more than 600,000 collection materials; that is an average of 185 materials each hour of operation
- [Hold 811 adult and children programs with more than 20,814 attendees: concerts, story times, book clubs, hands-on workshops, meetings and other library programs](#)
- Answer 36,914 reference questions
- [Assign 2,503 free or discounted museum passes, funded once again by the Friends of the Belmont Public Library, to area museums for families and individuals](#)
- Facilitate access to 42,604 eBooks, audiobooks, movies, and music selections – a 27% increase in downloaded materials
- Facilitate 9,114 views/downloads to Hoopla, another source of streaming and downloadable content, up 6% from the previous year

Our Library Hosts Community Events...

- [Books In Bloom](#) was sponsored by 5 community organizations, and included children's events
- Offered the 7th [One Book One Belmont](#) community read program highlighting *Frankenstein*, with over 600 people participating in 20 community programs

Our Library Benefits from Many Volunteers...

- Great support again this year from our volunteers. Over 25 individuals provided over 3000 hours to support library programs and services, including high school students fulfilling their community service requirement and [members of the Friends of the Library](#).
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