

# FLETCHER FREE LIBRARY



**Robert Coleburn**  
Interim Library Director

The Fletcher Free Library is the largest, busiest, urban public library in Vermont. Our mission is to inform, enrich, and nurture a community of lifelong learners. We envision the Burlington community engaged in lifelong learning, and the Library as an essential partner in Burlington's economic, social, and cultural growth.

The Fletcher Free Library is:

- Free and open to all;
- Dedicated to intellectual and personal freedom;
- Responsive, adaptive and accountable;
- Always learning;
- A steward of materials and spaces;
- Committed to working in partnership with the community;
- Passionate about our mission, the Fletcher Free, and Burlington.

## Facilities and Infrastructure

The Library continues to prioritize facility and infrastructure needs. We have benefitted from significant and much needed capital investments over the past two years, made possible and managed by the City's Capital Improvement Program.

- The Library has installed laptop tables for public use in the Main Reading Room. Each table is equipped with multiple power outlets and USB ports for charging.
- The Library installed new carpeting in our Main Reading Room.
- We installed eight new dome fixtures in the Carnegie Building, making the resources of the Children's Library easier to find and see.

## Staffing

- The Fletcher Free Library welcomed Lisa Buckton, our first-ever Teen Services Librarian, in January 2016. Lisa is a librarian, writer, and innovator. It is her utmost passion to engage with young adults and cultivate safe spaces for them to explore resources, identity, and community.
- Two part-time positions in Children's Library were expanded to full-time in FY16. This has allowed our Youth Staff to provide the community with quality programming and outreach which includes neighborhood services and community partnerships.
- Rubi Simon, Fletcher Free Library's Director, announced her departure in FY16, her final day was September 2nd, 2016. Rubi strategically positioned the Library for significant growth in programming, technology resources and community outreach by 2020, leading the development of a comprehensive strategic plan for the next four years.
- Circulation Chief, Toni Taginski, announced her retirement in FY16 after 10 years with the City.

Throughout her time at Fletcher Free, Toni was a welcoming face for patrons behind the circulation desk and a source of tireless energy ensuring patron needs were met.



## Library Services and Collection Development

### Library Services:

- Fletcher Free is open 58 hours a week, 353 days a year.
- The Library had 244,673 visits during FY16, approximately 700 visits a day.
- The library loaned 331,820 materials to patrons during FY16, over 900 check outs a day.
- Through FY16, the library had on average 12,737 active patrons a month.
- 2,590 new patrons registered during FY16.
- Patrons asked 8,658 reference questions of our librarians.
- 954 materials were loaned to other libraries and 662 materials borrowed from other libraries through Vermont's inter-library loan program.
- 42,802 login sessions in Burlington's only publicly available computer lab with internet connection, providing patrons with 800 login sessions a week.
- 114,930 website visits, or over 2,220 visits to the website a week.
- 14,287 wifi logins, approximately 275 logins a week.
- Over 75 volunteers contributed over 5,000 hours of their time to the Library.

### Collection Development:

- The Library collection is made up of 156,521 physical items, including 4,903 DVDs, 32,587 E-books, and 3,856 downloadable audiobooks.
- 12,267 new materials were added to the collection in FY16, over 1000 new materials added to the collection monthly.

## Literacy and Literary Programming

- 606 literacy and literary programs offered to the community in FY16, benefitted 12,904 community members.
  - 219 early learner and youth programs, with 9,333 participants.
  - 76 programs for teens, with 772 participants.
  - 311 programs for adults, with 2,799 participants.
- 846 community programs were held at Library during FY16, with over 9,700 participants.
- 228 senior residence book deliveries, music programs, and home-bound patron visits were conducted in FY16, benefitting on average 420 seniors each month.
- 227 beginner and intermediate English language learning classes and tutoring sessions, and foreign language conversations classes were offered the community in FY16. During FY16, our English language learners were native speakers of 14 different languages (Albanian, Bosnian, Chinese, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Persian, Polish, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Thai and Ukrainian).
- 32 digital literacy classes were offered the community benefitting 170 adults, approximately 30% of who were seniors.

### Programming Highlights

- 1,138 Pre-K-8th graders participated in 2016's Summer Reading Program. Students from all Burlington School District schools and grades, Burlington area private schools and home schoolers, as well as early learners, signed up to read and have fun at the library over the summer.
- FY16 saw the first ever Summer Reading Program for teens, which included a reading buddies program. 34 teens mentored younger readers under the coordination of two teen ambassadors, hired through the City Hall Summer Internship Program. The Summer Reading Program featured 10 collaborative programs, including author visits, teen Quidditch, and Bubble Soccer at the Waterfront. Additionally, in collaboration with Burlington High School, our Teen Librarian developed the Burlington Summer Reading List for 9th and 10th graders.
- Our Teen Librarian has been piloting teen programming, including Teen Write, Teen Make, Teen Challenge. These programs have been assessed and adapted to best meet the needs and interests of Burlington teens and tweens. Lisa has also assessed, weeded and broadened Fletcher Free's young adult collection, ensuring relevancy and diversity of resources. Continuous adaptation of current Teen Space is also underway to create a safe, vibrant and welcoming area where teens and tweens can thrive. Lisa has also developed a provisional Teen Space website and curated social media.
- A group of 13 teens comprise the new Teen Advisory Committee that advise, plan, and implement teen

programs. They are also working to create a welcoming and diverse Teen Space that is inclusive of all teens and tweens.

- FFL's early literacy programs were evaluated by a graduate student of Boise State University. The purpose of the evaluation was to illuminate current successes, and provide recommendations for future areas for growth for in-library and outreach programming. The overarching goal of the EL programming is to enable pre-school children to arrive at kindergarten ready to learn and succeed in school. Library programming seeks to develop children's literacy skills and model conversation and behavior for parents and caregivers. Overall caregivers and their children enjoy access to free, fun programming run by library staff who they truly appreciate. 78% of respondents indicated they use ideas from the EL programs at home. 59% of caregivers report that after attending the EL programs they have increased the amount of music and movement in everyday life with their child(ren). The report recommends: to offer programming for working parents; to make caregivers aware of the program's objectives, increasing the success of the learning objectives; to further develop early learning community outreach programming.
- Fletcher Free was granted an Early Education Initiative grant from the Agency of Education. The Library offered year-round early literacy programming for early learners four mornings each week (storytime and music programming, Spanish language & music, Yoga & music). The EEI grant has helped support ongoing literacy outreach support using VT Early Learning Initiative methods and materials to early learners,



**Mary Danko**  
Director (as of 2/17)



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parents and caregivers at 8 community centers, nutrition sites, and shelters.

- Community members gathered to listen to Chris Bohjalian talk about his then newly released book *The Guest Room*.
- Fletcher Free hosted an inter-generational cultural event combining music, literature, and history. M. T. Anderson, author of the book *Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad* (a National Book Award nominee), led a book discussion. Accompanying the author talk was a performance of Shostakovich's 8th Quartet played by musicians from the Vermont Symphony Orchestra.
- Wake up to Dying held a travelling exhibit and workshops at the Library that were aimed to shift cultural perspective on death from fear and avoidance toward acceptance, inviting people to acknowledge death, be prepared for it, and live more fully having done so. 700 people visited the exhibit and over 300 people participated in workshops, panels and chats.
- LOLA – Working with strategic partners Burlington Telecom and Big Heavy World, the library held 2 long distance music events using LOLA technology. LOLA stands for "low latency" and using a high bandwidth Internet2 connection, it let musicians from Burlington and Chattanooga play music together as if they were in the same room. This is a great example of using an ultra-high speed Internet connection to break down the challenge of collaborating over a long distance.

### Institutional growth

- Fletcher Free's Strategic Plan was developed on a foundation of community participation. Over 1,200 people provided input and feedback through community focus groups, forums and a survey. Integral to the Plan implementation is the development of a dynamic continuous improvement system that ensures delivery of services, and the management of resources and spaces remain aligned to community needs and expectations.
- The Fletcher Free engaged in an institutional rebranding project in FY16, which was completed at the end of August 2016. Our new brand is currently being rolled out in print and digitally. Our logo is vibrant and colorful, like our community. It is dynamic, like the services we offer the community. Our new brand celebrates a long history of service to Burlington as a trusted resource, representing the concept of shared knowledge.
- Library Administration and the Friends of the Fletcher Free Library worked collaboratively during FY16 to prepare the Friends to be the Library's 501c3 organization. Accounting processes were strengthened and a resource allocation process to the library was established. Into the future, the Friends will raise funds for library programming and professional de-

velopment that are beyond the scope of the City's budget, as well as special projects for long term capital investment.

- Patrons and staff benefitted from the addition of a security guard at the library. We are happy to report that the number of incidents are down since implementing the 32 hour a week security guard detail.
- Our outreach loans are now completely automated, and our outreach librarian uses an iPad for remote checkout of materials in real time



### Friends of the Fletcher Free Library

- The Friends financial support to Library programming, professional development and special initiatives is crucial in the provision of quality services to the community. In 2015, the Friends provided \$19,985 in support to the Library. Funds to support the Summer Reading Program and other events and programming, including a celebration of poetry and Spanish language early literacy and music programming. Library staff attended the American Library Association and the Vermont Library Association annual conferences as a results of Friends' financial support. The Friends also sponsored staff technology training during the implementation of the new Integrated Library Software (ILS) in FY16. These investments in our staff have helped ensure we have the skills and capabilities to remain relevant in a time of public library transformation.
- The Friends are also active in our community. Their outreach efforts are largely focused on the management of book and resource donations to the Library, and the sale and redistribution of these donations. In FY16, these efforts were made possible by over 2,500 hours of volunteer time. Our Friends run the book stall at Library, organize and manage three book sales a year, provide book donations to a range of community organizations in the area, as well as advocate for the Library and library services in the community.