

Fletcher Free Library

Peg Boyle Single, Chair, Library Board of Commissioners

MISSION STATEMENT

The Fletcher Free Library, the largest and busiest public library in Vermont, serves the evolving educational and cultural needs of the Greater Burlington community. Fletcher Free offers a welcoming space for people to gather and learn. A trained staff helps patrons locate the knowledge resources they need for work and pleasure.

Highlighting our Year

Strategic Planning Process

The Library Commission and Director engaged the services of a national library consultant during the second half of FY14. In FY15, Maureen Sullivan will lead a strategic planning process that will guide the direction of Library services and programming for the next five years and beyond. Through a series of community forums the Library will develop a strategy focusing on Fletcher Free's strengths and stakeholders' shared values and vision for our Public Library. This participatory planning process will focus on opportunities for Fletcher Free to contribute to community growth by:

- enhancing literacy and support lifelong learning;
- facilitating access to and exchange of knowledge;
- strengthening community connections.

New Staff at the Library

For the first time in modern memory the Library has a Financial Assistant and a Development Coordinator. Financial assistant Deb Woolford was hired in January 2014, and has already accomplished wonders by organizing the Library's budget processes and materials inventory, implementing a new staff time clock system, and taking on the management of a redesigned service and program data system. Kath Laing, who comes to the Fletcher Free with grant, data management and development experience, joined the staff in March 2014. In addition to traditional Development tasks, during FY15, Kath is working with our national Library consultant, the Library Commission and staff to implement the strategic planning process. Based on this Plan, Kath will work collaboratively with Library staff to develop programs responsive to community needs, and design and put into effect a long-term sustainability model for Library services and programming.

Our Physical Plant

With one wing of our Library celebrating its 110th anniversary this year, and with a "new" wing over 30 years old, it is not surprising that upkeep of physical space is expensive and challenging. An energy audit and facility condition assessment for both the historic and modern buildings were undertaken this past fiscal year by the Capital Improvement Program of Department of



Ruby Simon
DIRECTOR

Public Works and Burlington Electric Department. A schedule of necessary repairs and improvements has been developed as input to the City-wide 10-year capital improvement plan. A fire alarm work and preliminary electricity update was conducted over the summer, the HVAC system received emergency attention, and urgent masonry work the historic Carnegie Building's south wall is underway.

Friends of Fletcher Free

The Friends of the Fletcher Free Library had a busy and productive year. The Friends fiscal year runs through calendar year 2014. Through book sales and other revenue generating activities the Friends in conjunction with Library staff and volunteers raised over \$50,000 for reinvestment in the Library's services and programming. The Friends invested in professional development opportunities for Library staff, the purchase of capital equipment, enhancing youth and adult services and programming. A special thank you to our Friends President, Robin Twery, who works tirelessly to guide the organization throughout the year!



Library Services

Service results for FY14:

- 273,364 Library visits, equal to 751 visits a day on average or 6 visits per Burlington resident per year
- The Library is open 58 hours a week for a total of 3,016
- 378,889 total circulation, which is 9 checkouts per Burlington resident per year
- 13,233 active library patrons
- 3,692 reference questions
- 1,512 resources loaned to and 920 borrowed from VT libraries



- 9,724 volunteers hours logged, equivalent to over 4.5 FTE staff
- A total Library collection of 162,685, which consists of 117,094 print materials, 24,653 e-books, 5,568 videos, 13,476 audio materials, 271 subscription serials and 1,623 others
- The total number of transactions per capita is 10.5 for FY14
- Per capita tax support of \$32 producing a return on annual investment of \$288 / dollar spent (Library Research Services <http://www.irs.org/public/roi/calculator.php>)

Youth Services and Programming

Service and programming results:

- 278 programs for benefiting 6,763 youths and teens
- 147,943 youth materials borrowed by patrons
 - In addition to regular services and programming offered to families with children throughout the year – the Youth Services Department annually spearheads a Summer Reading Program (SRP) and the Books for Children Gift Campaign (BCGC).
 - The SRP, developed through FY14 and run in the summer spanning FY14 and FY15, aims to maintain and boost children’s reading achievement during the summer. Library staff promoted the program at schools, secured financial and in-kind support from 30 generous donors, and organized and delivered a dynamic schedule of literacy, science and nutrition programs for the duration of the 8-week program. 68 community volunteers collectively contributed 1018 hours of their time supporting the program. 1,419 K – 8th graders signed up for the program and together reported a grand total of 14,474 reading hours. More than 70% of 1st through 4th graders participated in the 2014 SRP. Partnerships with the Burlington School District (BSD) and Burlington Parks and Recreation (BP&R) sites have helped extend program reach in the community. This year an estimated 120 children also benefitted from free lunch at the Library thanks to Summer Nutrition and Recreation

program led by the Burlington School Food Project, Hunger Free VT and City Market.

- December 2014 was the 23rd BCGC, a book drive for children throughout the City. It was made possible with the cooperation of Crow Books and Phoenix Books in downtown Burlington, and partnered with the Vermont Children’s Trust Foundation Polar Express Event. 1,200 books were collected and distributed to the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS), the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Family Room, Head Start of Chittenden County, the King Street Center, the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf and the Sara Holbrook Community Center.

Programming and Partnerships

Service and programming results:

- 282 adult literacy programs held benefiting 3,326
- 230,946 adult resources borrowed by patrons
- 27 programs co-sponsored with community partners were organized, benefiting over 1000 people
 - Community organizations held 578 events and meetings at the library
 - In addition to ongoing ESL classes, the Library organized a very successful series of French/English and German/English conversation groups.
 - Chris Bohjalian and Steven Kiernan kicking off their national Rock-n-Roll Book Tour to a crowd of 300 in our Main Reading Room. This was one of many literary events co-sponsored by Phoenix Books this fiscal year. Author Mike Bond helped us raise funds for African wildlife conservation, Robert Resnik celebrated the lives of Burlington’s Legendary Locals and Julia Lyman introduced us to little known treasures in our National Parks, among many others. Fiction and non-fiction writers educated and inspired us to look at our world a little more closely.
 - Partnerships with Vermont International Film Festival, Global Film Initiative, Vermont Public Television and Burlington City Arts sponsored screenings of films from as far away as Kazakhstan. The monthly films were made by directors from around the globe, opening a window into the diverse world in which we live. Community Cinema films from Vermont Public Television and co-sponsored by OLLI brought us closer to home broadening our understanding of ourselves and neighbors.



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Diversity and Equity were the topics discussed in February among Burlington High School's Ninth grade students who spent a day at FFL exploring these themes.

- Laptop Literacy classes continued with assistance from Dollar General's American Dream grant. Over 30 New Americans took classes in their native languages to help improve their basic computer skills. Vermont Humanities Council partnered with FFL on a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association to fund a series of five book discussions called Muslim Journeys: Literary Reflections. Vermont Health Connect navigators found outreach opportunities at the library, helping to educate Vermonters on the new Affordable Care Act and sign up those needing coverage.
- Two multi-day Hack-a-thons sponsored by Code for BTU, the national Code for America movement's local brigade. The hack-a-thons produced applications with direct usefulness to non-profits and government departments. Big Heavy World convinced us to turn our Main Reading Room in to a punk rock concert venue. Finally, we are delighted to be a new First Night site. From late afternoon to night, the Reading Room transformed into a coffeehouse for singer-songwriters.

Community Outreach

Programming results:

- 292 outreach visits to 15 senior center sites and homebound individuals
- The Fletcher Free Library continues to provide book deliveries, reader's advisory, and a wide variety of music programs to hundreds of Burlington citizens in apartment houses, senior centers, and nursing homes throughout the City, as well as to a number of homebound individuals. Outreach Librarian, Robert Resnik, can often be seen on deliveries around town driving the Library's colorful van.



Information Technology and Computer Center *Service and programming results:*

- 51,555 login sessions in the computer center
- 166 people benefited from fall and spring session computer classes
- Computer center usage remains a key resource for the community. Routine upgrades to computers were made.
- Fletcher Free received a Google grant through the Vermont Department of Libraries that allowed us to purchase state of the art video-conferencing equipment in the Library for public use. The equipment allows staff and patrons to participate in online training or meetings, bring an author to the Library for a book discussion, broadcast a Library event on YouTube, conduct interviews and meet with colleagues around the world.
- A major innovation this year for both the public and the staff was the installation of a new interactive scanner and FAX station location in the Library's reference department. Our deepest gratitude to the Friends for the financial support to make this possible.

Milestones

- Congratulations to Circulation Department staffer Kate Bouton, who was elected by the staff to be the staff representative to the Library's Board of Commissioners.
- Thanks also to staff member Emer Feeney, who had represented the staff on the board for the past two years, and is now serving as the Shop Steward.

Fletcher Free Library Board of Commissioners

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Kate Bouton, Staff Representative
Peter Ireland, Trustee
Jill Krowinski, Commissioner
Mary Ellen Manock, Trustee
Ellen MacLellan, Friends Representative
Glenn McRae, Commissioner
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2 Trustee Vacancies under recruitment