

TRUSTEES OF THE J. V. FLETCHER LIBRARY

The J. V. Fletcher Library Board of Trustees is an elected six-member board empowered by Commonwealth law to set policy and oversee administration of the library. The Trustees are elected annually in pairs and serve overlapping three-year terms. Robert Price and Hajo Koester were re-elected in the May 2011 town election.

*Marianne Fleckner, Chair
Hajo Koester, Treasurer
Buffie Diercks, Secretary
Susan Flint
Robert Price
Jack Wrobel*

Progress Towards Trustee Goals:

The Board of Library Trustees' goal for FY11 was to continue the work of the J. V. Fletcher Library building expansion project and poise the Town of Westford to be prepared to apply under the next Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners public library construction grant round in approximately FY17. In support of that goal, the following objectives and activities were set forth:

- Meet with the Permanent Town Building Committee on Feasibility issues and Expansion Alternatives.
- Tour newly renovated and built public libraries. Starting in 2009, the Director and Board visited nine (9) libraries.
- Meet with Town staff, boards and officials to continue with needs assessment discussions
- Secure funding for a library building consultant and feasibility study at a future Annual Town Meeting.

While the Director and Trustees are extremely proud of the recent cosmetic renovations, our enthusiasm for continuing work on a building expansion project has not diminished. The Trustees realize and appreciate the fiscal uncertainty of the town, the state and the country, but the reasons for the building expansion are still valid. Space is still needed for new collections, technology, additional meeting rooms, and more adequate office and storage space. With that in mind, the Trustees met again with the Permanent Town Building Committee in September and in February. The Trustees agree that developing plans for the library building expansion should continue so that plans will be in hand when the economic situation improves. This trustee goal will therefore carry forward into the coming years.

A second goal for the Trustees in FY11 was to *maintain* hours of service to the Westford community. This includes fifty-two (52) hours during the academic year, fifty-five (55) hours during the Sunday season (January – April), forty-five (45) hours through July and August and thirteen (13) hours weekly for the Bookmobile. We have been successful with this goal and believe it has served the public well over the years. As we progress into FY12, hours actually are *increased* for the greater community, due to the discontinuance of Bookmobile service as of 6/30/2011.

A third goal in FY11 was for the Trustees to continue to work to restore departmental staffing lost in the prior year. As always, the goal is to provide exceptional service while maximizing efficiencies.

Library Trust Funds Activity:

In 2010, the Board of Library Trustees learned that former friend and volunteer, the late Gertrude Houghton had blessed the library with additional generosity -- a \$100,000 donation from Gertrude's estate. This bequest will have lasting effects on the J. V. Fletcher Library service program and staff development, with \$53,000 going to the J. V. Fletcher Library Foundation and \$47,000 into the principal of the E. D. Rainville Continuing Education Account. The Board of Library Trustees remember here, as well, the passing of benefactor Barbara Seavey. Barbara, and her late husband Gordon, are warmly remembered as both wonderful and civic-minded library patrons and benefactors. The Trustees thank here also, current Trustee Robert Price, and wife Ann, for their gift of stock to the Trustees' Benefactors Fund.

Trust fund money was used to purchase three museum passes and to cover most of the cost of the annual Staff and Volunteer Recognition Brunch. Additionally, the Board funded festive retirement events for Maureen Barry (see below).

As permitted by library policy, the Trustees funded memberships of the staff and the Trustees in various professional organizations and funded their attendance at a number of regional conferences, workshops and symposia. Printing of the semi-annual Events mailer was paid by Trust funds. The Trustees also approved funding for a promotional brochure for the establishment of a Foundation.

Library Policies:

The Trustees work with the director during the year to keep the library's governing policies compatible with the current facility, the latest technologies and the best practices in library operation. This year, the revision of the CORI (Criminal Offense Record Information) policy on the state level compelled the Trustees and the director to update the library's policy. In addition, with constant changing technologies, the director and Trustees worked together to update the Internet Access Policy and Guidelines. Additional new and revised policies include:

- eReader Loan Policy and Agreement (3/7/2011)
- Closing Policy (3/7/2011)
- Homebound Policy (6/6/2011)
- Video Policy (4/4/2011)

In April 2011, the Board of Library Trustees signed a Memorandum of Understanding with abutter First Parish Church United, thereby formalizing what has heretofore been an informal understanding – with the two organizations agreeing to a reciprocal and mutual use of each other’s parking lots, during hours and times when the other facility is not in use.

Professional Development and Activities:

Trustees attended the following event sponsored by our state library support organizations this year:

- The Massachusetts Friends of Libraries (MFOL)/MLTA 14th Annual Joint Conference on November 6th at the Worcester Technical High School: *Managing Change to Continue Essential Services for Your Library*.
- Trustees engaged in a Board Strategic Planning Retreat on June 13, 2011, and attended as well the Town-wide Strategic Planning Retreat at Kimball Farms, June 23, 2011.

Recognition:

The Trustees would once again like to thank the library staff for sustaining their high level of quality service to the community, despite continual downsizing and re-organizing. The Trustees would like to commend the library staff for being flexible in the extra hours they were willing to work, and the director for ingenuity in juggling their schedules. Added to this challenge, was the ever-increasing popularity of enhanced and expanded library programs. Innovation and commitment persevered in allowing the library staff to continue its reputation of excellent service.

The Trustees would also like to acknowledge and thank the skilled volunteers who perform critical tasks that keep the library functioning. In FY11, volunteers donated an average of 34 hours per week – or the equivalent to .92 of a full-time paid staff member. The library’s dedicated volunteers were honored at the annual Recognition Brunch in November of 2010 hosted by the Library Trustees and Friends. The Recognition Brunch additionally honored Staff Anniversaries occurring from Jan. 1, 2010 - Dec. 31, 2010:

- FOR 5 YEARS: Chantale Shepard, Leigh Nallen
- FOR 10 YEARS: Alla Brovina, Carole Climo, Jacki Dibble, Kristina Leedberg, Carol McCahon, Seana Rabbito, Holly Sheridan-Pritchard
- FOR 20 YEARS: Evelyn Desharnais, Virginia Moore, Karen Welz

Special events marked the June 30th retirement of Maureen Barry, Bookmobile Coordinator, after 29 years of dedicated, unstinting service to the patrons of the Westford library. Trustees hosted an evening Open House for Bookmobile patrons, the Board of Selectmen honored her at their June 28th meeting, and all participated in a final “drive-in” celebration for final trip of Bookmobile on June 30, 2011.

Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc.:

The library wouldn’t be the success it is without the hard work and unparalleled dedication of the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc. This auxiliary group’s annual fund raising effort to raise money for library collections and technology again this year brought much success -- providing funds that helped the library maintain the level of spending on books and other materials required by the MBLC to retain library certification. The Trustees would like to praise the Friends for another successful membership drive and outstanding quarterly book sale program.

The Friends continued to fund the purchase of new videos and bestsellers for the library’s popular collections, underwrite the majority of the museum passes, fund the summer reading programs and various holiday programs, and fund the juvenile, teen and adult programs throughout the year.

The Library Board and administration engaged in post-Town Meeting planning to design an optimal FY12 library Service Program in light of the Town Manager’s town-wide hiring freeze. With Bookmobile service discontinued as of June 30th, funds which formerly supported Bookmobile service were instead used to restore Monday morning hours, open summer Saturdays, and provide Sunday hours (January – April), while continuing Homebound service to Westford seniors, physically challenged and homebound patrons. While the end of Bookmobile service has been a source of widespread sadness for patrons, it is noteworthy that the entire community will benefit from the increased library service hours in FY12.

Note:

The library Trustees generally meet at 7:00 PM at the library on the first Monday of the month throughout the year. These meetings are, of course, open to the public and residents are always welcome to attend and comment. An updated meeting schedule is maintained at the library website: www.westfordlibrary.org. The Trustees may be reached through this website and all library policies are available there for public viewing.