



Mary Danko
Director

The Fletcher Free Library is always evolving to meet community needs in our mission to inform, enrich, and nurture a community of lifelong learners. We envision the Library as the community's living room—an inclusive space, which welcomes our diverse community with a wide array of free materials, programs, and services. Last spring,

we conducted a community survey to receive public feedback on our strategic plan progress and to learn more how the community would like the Library to meet needs in the future.

Statistics

Library Use

- The Library had 250,380 visits during FY19
- 199,588 total items were loaned to patrons during the year
- 16,118 eBooks were loaned
- 20,788 Downloadable audiobooks were loaned
- The Library welcomed 4,184 new patrons
- 162 people benefited from the Library Museum Pass program
- 160,424 website visits
- 15,108 WiFi logins
- 42,380 Public computer sessions
- 42,522 Reference questions were answered

Programs & Events

1041 Programs were offered to the community in FY19, benefitting 24,658 community members, including

- 632 Early Learner, Youth Programs & Teen Programs with 20,513 participants
- 374 Adult Programs with 3958 participants
- 35 Digital Literacy Programs were offered with 187 participants

Programming and Department Highlights

FY19 was a year of exciting new partnerships and programs, including these highlights:

The Harry Potter Party drew 100 participants to a day of magical activities in April 2019. This exciting event was supported by 17 amazing volunteers of all ages.

The Early Literacy Outreach Program (ELOP), an innovative pilot aimed at boosting kindergarten readiness and building strong early learners, launched in 2018 and matched its first volunteers to home child cares in early 2019.

The Blast Off Party, sponsored by NASA at my Library, the Space Science Institute, and STARnet, kicked off the *Summer Challenge* 2019: A Universe of Stories in June 2019. The event welcomed 200 children, teens, and adults to view moon rocks and meteorites, enjoy an interactive exhibit from ECHO, and launch the Green Record Project with Vermont Folklife Center. The Summer Challenge 2018: Libraries Rock! Program drew a total of 7786 program participants, distributed 819 outreach books, and offered 149 programs.



The Teen Department focused on collaborations and special programs during FY19, including outreach at Burlington High School and the Sara Holbrook Teen Center. Alex Contreras-Montesano, 2018 National Student Poet and Burlington resident, presented her poetry at a reception in November. In September, Ethan Sonnenborn and his teenage strategists discussed his historic campaign for Vermont governor.

The Youth Department collaborated with Champlain Valley Head Start to launch the *1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program* at their local day cares in May. The program will send preschool children home with carefully selected books to boost reading at home and kindergarten readiness.

Hour of Code encouraged youth to build their STEAM skills and to teach their grown-up to code, learning basic concepts during Computer Science Education Week in December.

Food for Talk Cookbook Book Club brought together



cooks of all backgrounds and experience to celebrate food and its entry to different cultures.

In Translation: Literature of the Arab World invited participants to experience the world through book discussions, arts programs, language classes and culinary experiences. No passport needed.

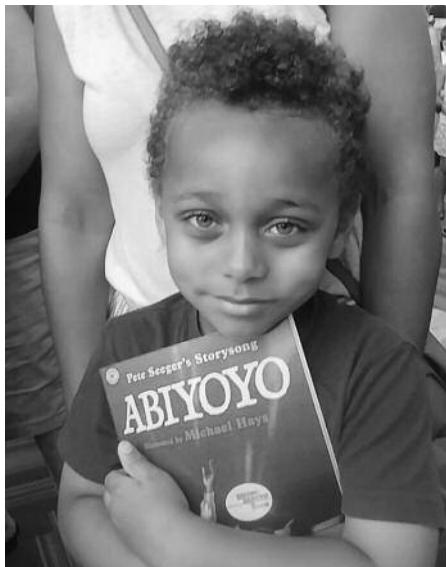
The *Irish Heritage Festival* in March brought diplomats and performers to Burlington, including Fionnuala Quinlan, Ireland's Consul General to Boston. Angela Patten, a Dublin-born thrice-published poet and Bill Drislane, singer, songwriter, poet and storyteller led a poetry workshop and reading. The event also included music and crafts.

The *Seed Swap* held in March celebrated the approaching gardening season and brought together gardeners to share seeds and ideas.

Highlight, Burlington's fresh take on celebrating New Year's Eve, included several events and activities at the Fletcher Free Library, including a drum circle, crafts, and music.

Computer Workshops: In addition to the usual offerings of Microsoft suite classes, new classes on HTML5/CSS3 and WordPress were well attended. The library was pleased to host a Grow With Google Day which included workshops and one-on-one consulting.

New Collections: The Library of Non-Traditional Things (LONT) expanded during the year, adding new cooking equipment, musical instruments, tools, and games. We have added many titles in the Youth, Teen, and Adult collections. Our online resources continue to grow in popularity and include free eBooks, eAudio-books, movie streaming, and more.



Staffing

One of the common responses in our community survey was how helpful and kind our staff is. We are so pleased to serve our patrons and the community at large. This year we wished a happy retirement to some staff and welcomed new employees to our library family.



Robert Coleburn retired in April 2019 after 26 years at the Library, serving in many capacities including interim Director (twice!), and most recently, Assistant Director. His calm manner, compassion and dry humor were much appreciated. Emer Pond Feeney who was our Circulation Manager was hired as the new Assistant Director. Susan Bevins retired in March 2019 after 40 years at the Fletcher Free Library. Her dedication and kindness are missed by her coworkers. Christine Demarais retired in November 2018 after 23 years at the library. Christine brought a creative touch to so much in the Youth area and is missed by many patrons, little and big as well as staff.

Gale Batsimm joined the staff as Development Manager in October 2018. She previously held development positions with nonprofits including Creative Living of Andover, the March of Dimes, and the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston. She looks forward to working in a public library and helping grow programs and services to the community.





Rachel Muse worked in the archives and records field for 15 years before moving into the public library world in June. She is excited to be the Manager of the library's Technical Services and Digital Content team and looks forward to bringing people together with content that will entertain and enrich their lives.

Kate Belluche joined the Youth Department team in January as a full-time employee and brings a inspired and inventive energy to the library.

We added several great staff to our Circulation Team this last fiscal year. We welcomed Maxamed Ibrahim, Ron Jacobs and Erin Murphy who all bring experience and enthusiasm to our main desk services team.

I am very grateful to our entire hard working staff. I would also like to thank all of the wonderful interns and volunteers who contribute their time and energy in all departments of the Library. The Library would not be the welcoming, inclusive space that it is without the dedication of these individuals.

Library Commission

The Library Commission consists of Trustees and Commissioners who volunteer their time to help the Library form policies and strategies to reflect community needs throughout the year. These dedicated volunteers kept the Library moving forward to accomplish goals in the strategic plan. We were also pleased to welcome two Student Commissioners during FY19.



Friends of the Fletcher Free Library

The mission of the Friends is to encourage community support for the Fletcher Free Library, raise money for its needs, promote cultural and literacy programs, and sponsor educational and enrichment programs for all ages.

In FY19, the Friends provided funds to launch the Early Literacy Outreach Program (ELOP), to provide youth literacy and music/movement programs, grow teen programming, and provide funding for adult programs such as *In Translation*. The Friends also supported professional development for Library staff.

The Friends signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Burlington designating their non-profit organization to manage fundraising efforts, including the annual appeal, for the Fletcher Free Library. In addition, the Friends administer the grants for many library programs and raises funds from book sales, merchandise, and book stall sales.

The Friends held the Second Annual Jazz Brunch, featuring Jenni Johnson and the Jazz Junketeers, during Women's History Month in March. Friends also provide support to the community by meeting with the owners of local Little Free Libraries, distributing books to community organizations in the area, and advocating for the Library and library services in the community.

The incredible dedication and volunteer efforts of the Friends inspire the staff and me in our work. They are an essential part of the library team and demonstrate the benefits of libraries' public/private partnerships to create a welcoming space and free programs for the community.

Together We Create Community

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the community for your support, input, and energy. Thank you!

