

## BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

The Belmont Public Library had another exciting and active year. Some of the highlights - the Library was placed 13<sup>th</sup> on the wait list for the 2005 Library Construction Grant Round of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The Belmont Library Foundation raised \$250,000 to match the Dustan Challenge Grant. A few new programs were offered such as Stories and More; a new program of stories, songs, games and crafts held monthly for children in Kindergarten through grade two, and a new Music on Sunday Concert Series which received high scores. We added databases to the electronic collection including CQ Research, Mergent Online, and Book in Print.

### Staffing

The library experienced several personnel changes in 2005. The following is a list of the new members who joined the library team.

Denise Shaver became the Coordinator of Children's Services after Liz Moulton resigned and relocated to New Hampshire. Denise comes to us from Pennsylvania where she worked for the Free Library of Philadelphia. There she worked as a Children's Librarian for five years at the Frankford Branch and then became the Branch Manager/Children's Librarian at the Rodriguez Branch Library where she worked for two years. Her most recent job was Library Coordinator for the Extension Division. Here, Denise coordinated activities for sixteen branch region libraries in all areas of service, including collection development and programming. Denise earned an MS from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College and a BA in History from Catholic University of America.

Joan Martin became the Library Assistant in Technical Services after Kevin Grant resigned to pursue his studies at the University of Toronto. Joan is a Belmont resident and has been a long time library supporter. Her career had been in retailing and business management. She attended the Babson College Business Management Program and began a career in retailing and business management. She gave up her career, she raised her two children. During that time and Joan participated in many school and community projects. She was a community representative on the library's five year Long Range Planning Committee in 2003. Joan began by working at the library in the circulation department as a part-time library assistant in May of this year and was promoted to the full-time library assistant in Technical Services this August.

Kristen Maultsby became the Young Adult Librarian after Laura Berdish resigned to reenter the business world. During the past four years, Kristen has worked part-time at the Belmont Public Library both in the children's room and at the reference desk in adult services, and has helped with young adult programs ranging from school visits to individual reference appointments for eighth-grade history students. Kristen's extensive library experience includes work at the Harvard Law Library, the Littauer Library (a Harvard University library specializing in economics, government, and political science), the Main University Library at the University of Arizona, and the Central University Library at UC San Diego. A Belmont resident and parent of two teenagers, she earned her MS from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College and a BS in ornithology from UC Davis.

Deitra Barnes became the Administrative Assistant following the retirement of Esther Folts, after twenty-six years of service to the Library. During the past two years Deitra worked part-time in the circulation department as a library assistant. Prior to coming to the library, Deitra worked as a library assistant at the Belmont High School. Deitra earned her Bachelor of Engineering Technology at Northeastern University.

In the area of professional development, members of the reference staff, children's staff and library director attended several workshops during the year. Topics included on creating Web pages using Dreamweaver, emerging technologies for information gathering, podcasting, the reference department of the future, medical information for consumers, legal reference resources, the new PowerSearch feature for searching Infotrac, and other topics.

The American Library Association (ALA) held its annual business and committee meetings in Boston in January. Maureen Connors and Emily Reardon took advantage of this great opportunity to see the newest technology and best products from vendors, the latest in technology and to share ideas with other librarians. Christine Hunnefeld and Emily Reardon also attended the Massachusetts Library Association annual conference in the spring, where they attended workshops on developing programs for "50-somethings", dealing with change, and the Wikipedia (a free Web-based encyclopedia), and other digital innovations.

### Delivery

2005 presented an unprecedented challenge to our resource sharing. The delivery service, provided by the State to the Metrowest region, simply could not handle the ever increasing volume of our resource sharing and the situation quickly grew into a crisis. The Metrowest region contains not only the libraries in the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) but a total of 300 public schools and additional other public libraries. The growth in resource sharing among the MLN libraries alone has gone from 400,000 items in FY03 to 1,246,000 in FY05. Because A/V represents 40% of network transfers, an immediate suspension of it was imposed as a temporary measure to help try to alleviate the immediate delivery problem. All parties involved - Metrowest, MLN and the State - worked very hard to resolve the situation in a timely manner, but regrettably unfortunately, it took from July 29 to November 21 to finally be resolved. A/V borrowing was restored but with a restriction on the lending of feature films in DVD and video format per a vote of the Membership. New feature films make up 15% of the network transfer business. This vote required all member libraries to make new DVDs and videos local request or non requestable for the first year. The Board of Library Trustees who have never restricted lending materials voted to restrict new DVDs and videos to Belmont residents only instituting the first ever restriction on lending materials. The situation will be monitored throughout 2006.

### **Dustan Fund**

Last year (2004) ended with a surprise challenge grant from the Jane Gray Dustan Estate to be used for construction of a new library building. Everyone saw this as a great way to begin our long term-long-term fundraising effort. To accomplish this by May of 2005, the newly formed Belmont Library Foundation (BLF) hired consultant Danny Watts, who successfully completed the \$4.2M fundraising campaign for the Cary Memorial Library in Lexington, to help them meet the challenge. If the BLF could raise \$250,000 by the end of May 2005, the Dustan Estate would donate another \$250,000. The BLF went into high gear and announced at the April Town Meeting that they had successfully met the \$250,000 match.

This September, the Trustees received an additional \$250,000 from the Dustan Estate for the Children's Fund. The original Jane Gray Dustan Children's Education and Enrichment Fund was established in 1998 with a generous gift from Ms. Dustan of \$250,000. The children's room was renamed in Ms. Dustan's honor. This gift enables the children's department to provide a variety of programs that otherwise would not have been possible. Jane Dustan's overall generosity to our Town's library of \$750,000 is unprecedented. We are extremely grateful that the library is a recipient of Ms. Dustan's generous legacy. Her example of civic spirit not only enriches the lives of children but also enriches the whole community and generations of library patrons yet to come.

### **Library Building Grant**

The Board of Library Trustees, staff, feasibility study committee, Friends of the Library and the Belmont Library Foundation all worked very hard on preparing the MBLC grant and on keeping the community, Town committees, Selectmen and Town Meeting members informed regarding the proposed new library building plans. All the hard work was rewarded at the April Town Meeting with a unanimous "yes" vote to go forward with the grant application for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) Public Library Construction Grant Program. This was an exciting moment for the library. Not knowing if the State would have another grant round, it was very important for the Library to be able to apply and hopefully get in the queue. Belmont would be one among 40 Towns to apply for the Public Library Construction monies. The MBLC made their announcements on July 7, 2005. Belmont was placed in the middle of the wait list that included twenty-five municipalities. Belmont's lucky number was thirteen. The Library is now slated to receive \$4.6 million dollars for the construction of a new library, one of the largest provisional awards granted by the MBLC. This wait list can be five or more years out. The Board of Library Trustees, held a thank you celebration on July 20<sup>th</sup> for those who helped in the process of planning the grant application and for all residents who had supported them along the way. Ice coldIce-cold lemonade and cake was enjoyed by many and was just perfect for the warm summer nightevening. Jil Westcott, chairmanchairman of the Board of Library Trustees and Angelo Firenze, Selectmen, congratulated the library and thanked all those who participated.

### **Building Woes**

In 2005, many building repairs, typical for an aging facility, needed to take place. Sections of the gutters were slated for minor repairs but aA major snow stormsnowstorm in January resulted in the formation of ice dams and the gutters in the rear of the building collapsed.

Minor repairs to the new rubber roof, installed in 2004, corrected several leaks in the magazine and young adult area. The elevator, which is original to the building, was declared in violation of new codes. The hydraulic piston and pump had to be replaced. The elevator was out of service for two weeks while repairs were made.

The telephone and voice system, after six years, needed to be upgraded. In NovemberNovember, the library worked with NEC Unified Solutions and to installedinstall a new phone and voice communication system whichsystem that was then integrated and was integratedd it with the Town Hall system. All Town departments will eventually be on the same system thereby providing Town wide four digitfour-digit dialing between all connected locations.

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### **Library Use Remains High**

Patron use of the Belmont Public Library continued to increase in 2005, based on use of both the physical and electronic resources. At the main Memorial Library, the annual circulation was 515,240 items, an increase of 10,175 items over the previous year. Circulation for the system, including Benton and one month of Waverley statistics, totaled 524,616, an increase of almost 5,000 items. With an annual circulation of 524,616, Belmont once again ranked among the most heavily used libraries in its population group of fifty-four Massachusetts communities. It is notable to mention that circulation increased even though MLN suspended delivery of audio-visual material from August through mid-November. The number of items requested in FY05 by Belmont patrons from other Minuteman libraries, and sent by Belmont to patrons at other libraries, totaled 94,600 – an increase of about 30% over the previous fiscal year.

In the Hennen's American Public Library Ratings, a national rating based on federal data in fifteen different categories including circulation per capita, collection turnover, visits per capita etc., Belmont was ranked 15<sup>th</sup> among 546 libraries in the state and 6<sup>th</sup> in its population group. The ratings were published in the October 2005 issue of *American Libraries*, the journal of the American Library Association.

As a different measure of patron use of the Library, staff analyzed a "snapshot" of items checked out on two days during the year. On Nov. 3, 2005, 21.3% of Belmont patrons had checked out items, the 6<sup>th</sup> highest in the Minuteman network's forty-one libraries; the average number of items was five per patron, the 7<sup>th</sup> highest in the network. On July 15, 2005, 20.8% of Belmont patrons had checked out items, the 13<sup>th</sup> highest in the network; the average number of items was 5.1 per patron, the 9<sup>th</sup> highest in the network.

### **Increased Access to Internet and Other Electronic Resources**

To meet the increasing patron demand for Internet access, the Library added Internet access to two computers that had been dedicated to word processing and the catalog, bringing the number of computers with Internet access to thirteen. Microsoft Office was installed on all of the Internet PCs, making it easier for patrons to cut and paste resumes into job applications, send attachments to email, and perform other tasks. Patrons showed their appreciation of these resources by logging in approximately 26,500 Internet sessions on Library PCs. Others brought their own laptop computers to the Reference room to take advantage of the wireless connection donated by Comcast in 2004. While patrons honed their research skills, they still sought assistance from the reference librarians, asking about 42,000 reference questions in person, by phone, and by email.

Expanding the electronic resources offered by the Library was an important initiative in 2005. Belmont subscribed for the first time to Mergent Online, CQ Researcher, and Books in Print, bringing to thirty-six the number of databases available through the Library Web site. These three new databases can be accessed by Belmont patrons both inside and outside the building, from any computer with an Internet connection. Mergent Online provides extensive financial and business information on publicly-traded companies; current and historic stock information with buy and sell recommendations; and the capacity to generate lists of companies that fit certain criteria, such as geographic region or industry code. CQ Researcher, known for its objectivity, offers in-depth analysis of current and controversial topics, such as the right to die and how to rebuild New Orleans., prepared by Congressional Quarterly, an organization known for its objectivity. Books in Print offers book reviews, author biographies, synopses, sample chapters, and reading suggestions.

Database usage statistics show that patrons are becoming more aware of, and comfortable with, the electronic resources available through the Library's Web site. Patrons logged in 373 times to the ABC-Clio trio of databases on ancient, modern world, and American history; conducted 2,344 searches in 443 sessions of viewing Books in Print; and conducted 125 sessions with SAT, Advanced Placement, and career certification practice tests using the Learning Express database. Patrons made good use of the Historic New York Times, performing 2400 searches with this superb source of book reviews, historic stock pricing, and primary source historical information. Most dramatic of all was the increase in the use of Infotrac, a set of databases provided by the Metrowest Massachusetts Regional Library System and the MBLC that provides access to the full text of many newspaper and magazine articles published over the past twenty-five years. The number of individual searches nearly doubled in the past year alone, from 19,000 searches in 2004 to 34,500 searches in 2005.

### **Collection Development**

In the fall, Verizon awarded the Library a \$5000 literacy grant to update English-as-a-second-language and other literacy materials for adults. Materials will be purchased in a variety of formats including print, CD, CD-Rom, and video. The current collection has been reorganized for easier access. Elisabeth Strachan, branch Librarian, is overseeing the project.

Following an evaluation of the law collection, the library director, coordinator of public services and reference staff decided to expand the Library's subscription to Westlaw, an online source of Massachusetts law, to include the entire Massachusetts Practice Series, the KeyCite citation service, and federal materials such as the U. S. Code Annotated (USCA). They also decided to drop a few print subscriptions, including the Federal Register and the USCA, in favor of the more easily-searched electronic versions, was made after monitoring patron use and consulting with patrons and law librarians. The Library also changed its subscription to Well-Connected, a source of in-depth medical information for consumers, from the print to the online version. Many publishers, including the federal government, are encouraging the shift to electronic formats because they are more easily updated, less expensive, and use fewer natural resources.

### **Computer Instruction for Adults**

Technology Librarian Christine Hunnefeld continues to offer a variety of classes to help patrons take advantage of the many resources available through our Web site – for free! One hundred twenty-three individuals attended sixteen computer workshops on Advanced Google, Reader's Resources, and the Library Catalog. The Advanced Google and Reader's Resources workshops were lecture-style presentations in the Assembly Room. The catalog workshops were held at the Senior Center computer lab so that they could be hands-on.

During the summer, the CyberTeens-CyberSeniors program returned by popular demand. For the second time, teens volunteered to guide senior citizens through the intricacies of email, Microsoft Word, the Library catalog, and the Internet. Ten high school students volunteered three mornings a week for six weeks during July and August, working with the seniors in hour-long, one-on-one appointments. As they surfed the Net, the teens and seniors clearly were having a good time, developing friendships as well as computer skills. The Minuteman Library Network loaned four laptop computers so that seniors could have a hands-on experience; the Library would like to purchase its own laptops that would be available for computer instruction year-round.

### **Library Programs for Adults**

Belmont is a town that appreciates music – and the new Music on Sunday concert series launched by the Library in 2005 clearly struck a chord. The Library began the program in March and April with a series of three concerts:

- sponsored by the Friends of the Library: The Danny Morris Trio, a jazz trio of Berklee College of Music faculty members featuring Belmont resident and bass player Danny Morris
- ; Matt and Shannon Heaton, performing Irish music shortly after St. Patrick's Day
- ; and Alfred Watson, a classical pianist with an interest in Chopin.

The response was so enthusiastic that the Coordinator of Public Services proposed another series of Music on Sunday concerts, taking place at 2 PM the first Sunday of the month, October 2005 through May 2006. In the first two concerts of this series, Danny Morris returned with his band Calypso Hurricane, five-time nominee for the Boston Music Awards, which had audience members dancing in the aisles, and reference librarian Andy Moore performed with the New Orleans Jazz Band, a group that has been playing Dixieland favorites for two decades. More than 500 people attended these concerts. Four more additional concerts have been scheduled for 2006, all taking place in the Assembly Room. Friends of the Library fund the Music on Sunday series, and funded by the Friends of the Library.

The book discussion group at the Belmont Senior Center continued to meet in 2005 on the second Friday of every month. The discussion group is led by reference librarian Miriam MacNair. The meetings were well-attended and the discussions were lively and stimulating. Among the books discussed in 2005 were *Silas Marner* by George Eliot, *The Pioneers* by James Fenimore Cooper, *String Too Short to Be Saved* by Donald Hall, and *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry.

Books and Bites, a book review program at the library coordinated by branch librarian Elisabeth Strachan and reference librarian Miriam MacNair, continues to be popular. It features presentations by local residents, Belmont Public Library staff, and local authors. The books and Bites presentations in 2005 were excellent and were very well-attended. Local residents who gave presentations included: Gillian Aguilar, Grace Taylor, Amy Wagenfeld, Martin Cohen, Margaret Meyer, Sarah Ellison, Marcia Lynch, Martha Jacoby, Elizabeth Atkins, Natalie Pascoe, Jeanne McCarthy, and Sid Werlin.

The books that they discussed included the following titles:

- *Present Value* by Sabin Willett,
- *All Fishermen are Liars* by Linda Greenlaw,
- *Did Adam and Eve Have Navels?* by Martin Gardner,
- *Are Universes Thicker Than Blackberries?* by Martin Gardner,
- *Eventide* by Kent Haruf,
- *The Hiding Place* by Corrie ten Boom,
- *Overdosed America: The Broken Promise of American Medicine* by John Abramson,
- *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird* by Phillip Hoose,
- *Just Looking: Essays on Art* by John Updike,
- *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini,
- *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Asne Seierstad,
- *The Year of Wonders* by Geraldine Brooks,
- *A Complicated Kindness* by Miriam Toews,
- *Blessings* by Anna Quindlen,
- *War Trash* by Ha Jin,
- ♣• *Outside the Magic Circle: The Autobiography of Virginia Foster Durr* by Virginia Foster Durr.

### **Young Adult Programs**

Once again, Belmont's Young Adult program proved one of the most active in the Minuteman Library Network, with approximately 1,500 students participating in Library programs. A strong school-library collaboration continued to form the basis of many of the activities. The Young Adult librarian, along with other members of the Reference Staff, conducted classes throughout the year to show students how to use the Library's print and electronic resources in their research. Eight senior English classes visited the Library (two in January and six in the fall) for an introduction to literary criticism and some hands-on experience using the Library's print series and online databases. Twelve sixth-grade social studies classes visited the library in the spring to learn how to track down information on Ancient Civilizations in preparation for their first major social studies research paper. In April, thirteen tenth-grade English classes were introduced to newspaper and magazine databases, Internet sources, and books that Belmont librarians had selected specifically for their persuasive writing assignments on current and controversial issues.

The Young Adult Department continued to support eighth-graders as they prepared for the National History Day competition, an integral part of the middle school curriculum. The Reference Librarians conducted sixty-two half-hour individual and small group appointments, serving eighty-seven students. Librarians also helped judge projects on History Day at both Chenery Middle School and Belmont High School.

The Teen Summer Reading Program kicked off in June with the Fourth Annual Belmont Band Bash, an outdoor concert co-sponsored with the Belmont Police Department DARE Program and the Belmont Youth Commission. Nine bands featuring Belmont high school students performed in the park next to the Library and behind the Underwood Pool, before an appreciative audience of about 150 teens. Later in June, author Gerard Purciello spoke about his book *The Year They Won: A Tale of the Boston Red Sox*, about a group of boys determined to help the Red Sox win the World Series in 2024. Over the course of the summer, ninety-seven students registered for the Teen Summer Reading Program, entitled Going Places@Your Library. The students read and reported on 423 books and submitted eighty-eight answers to weekly trivia questions, as they competed for prizes donated by Belmont businesses and the Friends of the Library. The prizes were awarded at a closing pizza party and raffle for the summer readers.

Other Young Adult enrichment programs continued to be popular and well-attended. Chenery Middle School Instructor, Adele Wilson, returned in the Fall with "*Let's Get it Write*," a six-session creative writing workshop for fifth to eighth graders. A loyal group of fifteen to twenty aspiring writers attended each week. The Manga/Anime Club for middle school fans of Japanese comics met from January through June, when its membership, who had met monthly for three years, moved

on to other interests. The group was led by Elaine Alligood, Cheney parent and Veterans Administration librarian. Also offered in 2005 was a childcare and babysitting workshop conducted by nurse/educator Janice Nolan Henry.

The Library opened up a whole completely new aspect of cultural programming by purchasing a license to show movies. In the fall, the Young Adult librarian organized a film series for young people entitled, "*From Funny Books to Film.*" Forty-two middle-schoolers spent early release afternoons following the exploits of Spiderman and The Incredible Hulk. More screenings for both teens and adults are scheduled for 2006.

The Department and the Library, once again, benefited from the efforts of a dedicated team of student volunteers. Thirty-six students performed 1,035 hours of community service as part of their high school graduation requirements. The students shelved and organized books, suggested new books and magazines, wrote book reviews, participated in the popular CyberTeens – CyberSeniors program, and even translated some signs into Russian.

In a joint effort, the Young Adult and Children's Departments hosted a "Family Night at the Library" on March 1. This was the kick-off event for the Belmont Youth Commission's "Belmont Unplugged," a month in which families are encouraged to get "unplugged" from their TVs and computers. Families could visit different rooms in the Library to attend a story time, listen to the Andy Moore Swing Trio, play board games, and chat over refreshments.

### **Children's Programming**

2005 was a wonderful year for the Jane Gray Dustan Children's Room had a wonderful year offering. A total of 178 programs, which attracted were offered and 6,071 children attended.

Librarians offered the following weekly story programs for young children: Book Babies for six to twenty-four months, Stories for 2's and 3's, and Story-Craft for children ages four and five. These Storytimes ran for eleven weeks in the fall, six weeks in the winter, and ten weeks in the spring. Total attendance at these popular programs grew to 2,345 children. The weekly Friday Playtimes first begun in 2003 continued. This informal toddler and preschooler program allows both children and adults to meet new friends while becoming familiar with our resources. The Jane Gray Dustan Trust continues to fund the always popular Sing Alongs of Julie Goetz and Liz Buchanan, who each perform monthly at the Main Library. Ms. Goetz also brings her folksongs and finger-plays to the Benton Branch for their monthly Sing Along.

For School Age children the Book Discussion for children in grades four to six, which began in 2002, remains enormously popular. There is never a shortage of enthusiasm from the ten to fifteen young people who attend this monthly program. This program runs from September to May and attendance ranges from ten to fifteen students. The Library Catalog Class also targeted this age group. Building on the success of last year's program, three new sessions were offered in 2005. Nineteen students attended these classes. 2005 saw the continuation of the Children's Room Community Service program for sixth graders. Participants volunteer for one hour a week, for five weeks. The program provides Middle School students with another option as they work toward fulfilling their community service requirement. It is also a benefit to the library.

During the school year, the Jane Gray Dustan Trust made possible the following programs: Higgins Armory Museum in February, Lisa Manning's Cruise Jubilee in March, Mad Science of Boston in April, The Halloween Party with Elaine Kessler in October, Picture Book Stories with Betty Lehrman in November, and Moovin' and Groovin' with the Snowflake Fairy in December.

Seven hundred and twenty six 726 readers participated in "Going Places @ Your Library," the 2005 summer reading program which kicked-off on June 21. The children ranged in age from three to twelve. As a result of the Jane Gray Dustan Trust funds enabled, the Belmont Public Library was able to offer a stellar programming line up including:

- The Frog Prince with Pumpnickel Puppets,
- Kathy's Kids Songs,
- Musical PJ Story Time with Elaine Kessler,
- Storyteller Carolyn Martino,
- Magic for Muggles,
- Jeff Boyer's Fun with Energy,
- Fabulous Fifties Songs for Families with Lisa Manning,
- Songs with Arnie Harris,
- Bug Works,
- and a final program with Mr. DJ.

In addition, the children's librarians offered Pop-up Book Time, Chalk the Walk, Bubble Day and Summertime Stories; plus Tuesday noontime movies where children were able to enjoy their lunch picnic style while viewing. Total attendance at these summer programs was 1,880. The Friends of the Library generously supported the summer reading program by providing prize baskets.

The highlight of the year program-wise was a Storytime with the First Lady of the Commonwealth, Mrs. Ann Romney, on November 28. Honoring Children's Book Week, this program attracted sixty-three picture book fans of all ages, including a local Brownie troop. First Lady Romney held the audience spellbound as she read about Olivia the pig and Alexander and his very bad day.

Children's Librarian, Deborah Leopold, completely re-designed and expanded the children's web page. This summer, children were able to submit books they read for the summer reading club via email. The web page now includes book reviews written and submitted by children and the librarian's recommended quick picks.

### **Technical Services**

In 2005 over 9,000 items (books, periodicals, audiovisuals, etc.) were processed and added to the collection and 19,500 items were withdrawn. The latter includes over 8,000 items from the Waverley Branch Library which Library that closed in February.

Technical Services staff continued the reclassification and relabeling of various sections of the Library's book collection. This project is designed to enhance the patron's ability to locate items by making the collection more accessible.

### **Meetings and Volunteers**

The library director and Trustees attended Meet Belmont with an exhibit of the new proposed library plans. The evening was held at the high school and was very well attended. This was a great opportunity to answer questions and explain the floor plans for the new library. Everyone who stopped by the exhibit was enthusiastic about the plans.

The League of Women Voters invited the library director, the adult services coordinator and the children's coordinator to be their guest speakers for one of their monthly morning coffees. The library staff highlighted all the services that are available through the library web page such as resources and lists of homework help for children and young adults, emailing your reference questions to a librarian, access to databases, upcoming events, new items, and community groups just to name a few. Most of the attendees were unaware of the resources that the library has made available to the community and were extremely impressed.

The L Library's meeting rooms continued to be popular; sometimes staff with program ideas were turned away because the rooms were already booked. The Library hosted 810 programs and meetings with 18,503 people in attendance, a large number for a town with 24,000 residents. Of these events, nearly half – 342 programs – were sponsored by the Library, with 9,538 people attending.

Volunteers continue to play an important role at the Library. This year our dedicated volunteers contributed 2,046 hours, over three hundred more hours than last year. Volunteers shelved and organized books, entered catalog data, conducted special projects, delivered books to the homebound, and gave book reviews at the monthly "Books and Bites" presentation. The Trustees would like to thank all the volunteers for their valuable contributions, with a special mention of one of the newest volunteers, Sally Brownrig, who has helped with shelving three mornings a week throughout the year.

The Belmont Historical Society continues to staff the Clafin Room with a volunteer several times a week, to help individuals locate documents, maps, and other items of historical significance that are stored there.

The Friends of the Library continue to fund the "Belmont Bugle", the library newsletter produced by the director. The ninth annual staff day was held in June. This year, as always, the staff day committee, which is comprised of staff members from the different departments within the library, planned a variety of workshops for the day. The morning session consisted of hands-on training workshops focusing on improving searching techniques in the catalog, millennium client, and circulation. These programs were geared toward enhancing the service we provide to our patrons. These workshops were conducted by Susan Saul and Rick Taplin, staff members of User Services for the Minuteman Library Network. The luncheon was sponsored by the Friends of the Library. The afternoon session was a workshop on Public Relations conducted by Laura Saunders, faculty member for Simmons College, Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

The library is fortunate to have the support of many community groups, most notably the Friends of the Library, the Rotary Club, the Garden Club and the Historical Society. The Friends of the Library hosted two major book sales this year - a special book sale was held during Town Day in May and the traditional October book sale was held as usual. Both were successful! The money raised supports adult and young adult programming, programming; helps purchase reading incentives for the Children's Department and funds the museum pass program. The museum pass program which consists of passes to seventeen institutions - The Aquarium, Audubon Society, Children's Museum, Boston by Foot, DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Discovery Museum, Peabody Essex Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Gardner Museum, Harvard Art Museum, Harvard Natural History Museum, John F. Kennedy Museum, Plimoth Plantation, Science Museum, Zoo New England (Franklin Park and Stone Zoos) and the Gore Place Mansion. These museum passes are available to all residents of Belmont who have a current Minuteman Library Network card. The passes circulated 1,843 times.

The Wildflower Garden Committee, Nanny Almquist, Susan Marsh, and Mark Saidnaway worked very hard beautifying the garden this year. A major clean up was done and a new stone path was installed which was a lovely addition to the Garden.

The Friends continued to sponsor the ever popular ever-popular Author Series in 2005. The programs were coordinated by Heather Baiany and Jennifer Altshuler. The programs were all well-attended and enthusiastically received. Programs in the series included discussions and book signings by the following authors:

- Tom Perrotta discussing his book *Little Children* on February 8th (attendance was 110 people),
- Steve Almond discussing his book *Candyfreak: A Journey Through the Chocolate Underbelly of America* on March 22<sup>nd</sup> (attendance was thirty-nine people),
- Elinor Lipman discussing her books on May 18<sup>th</sup> (this program was an Eliese C. Creane Memorial program with an attendance of 125 people),
- Ken Janjigian discussing his book *Trapped Doors* on September 27<sup>th</sup> (attendance was fifteen people),

- Claire Cook discussing her book *Must Love Dogs* on October 18<sup>th</sup> (attendance was forty-six people),
- Tony Massarotti discussing his book *A Tale of Two Cities: The 2004 Red Sox-Yankee Rivalry and the War for the Pennant* on November 1<sup>st</sup> (attendance was eighty-one people),
- Lauren Shaw discussing her book *Maine Women: Living on the Land* on December 6<sup>th</sup> (attendance was eighty-one people).

This year the Friends held a special evening at the Charles Bank Bookstore to say thank you to the organization's "special friendsSuperfreinds". "Special FriendSuperfriends" members were able to shop on a Sunday evening when the store would normally be closed and receive a 20% discount too. Wine and cheeseWine, cheese, and lots of conversation and shopping made for a lovely new annual event.

### **Branch Libraries**

The Benton Branch Library continued providing popular programs such as storytimes, sing-alongs, and playtimes for children. For adults, Benton Branch had lively book discussions about *The Book of Salt* by Monique Truong, and *The Confessions of Max Tivoli* by Andrew Sean Greer. The highlight was a visit by Belmont author Leah Hager Cohen when we discussed her title *Heat Lightning*.

The Waverley Branch Library opened with eighty-three volumes in 1910. It was known as the Waverley Reading Room and was housed in the then Daniel Butler School at the intersection of Trapelo Road and Waverley Street. In 1919, the Reading Room was changed to a branch library and books began to circulate. In 1929, the school building was converted to the Waverley Fire Station, and in 1933, an addition was added to house the branch library. With the consolidation of the fire stations, the Waverley Fire Station was closed and scheduled to be sold to a developerwas put up for sale. The Branch Library, after many decades of service to the Belmont community, would close when the building was sold. ButHowever, the Waverley Branch had to close prematurely due to frozen pipes and two failed boilers. The Waverley Branch Library closed in February never to be reopened. The building was sold by the Town to a developer who will build condominiums, preserving the historic brick facade. The Waverley Branch Library's books and furniture were donated to Belmont elementary schools, the Belmont Senior Center, Benton Branch, and Main Belmont library building. Remaining titles and furnishings were sold at a book sale on the premises, in May. During the sale, a memory notebook was made available for those patrons who had used the library and wanted to share a fond memory. with us. One such memory was from Helen Baker who wrote, "Used to visit this wonderful library as a little girl with my mother every week! (25 years ago) I looked forward to my visit each time and read books with my mother every night. This library will always have a special place in my heart!" Clearly, library services are the best bargain in Town.

Respectfully submitted,

Jil Westcott, Chairman  
Vera Dreyer, Mary Keenan, Lawrence McCormick, Hal Shubin, Heli Tomford