Year in Review

We are pleased to report that FY17 has positioned the library to be well on its way to achieving the new strategic objectives and goals delineated in our Strategic Plan FY 2016 - 2021. This year, a total of 139,406 people visited the library to check out materials, attend programs, and study or conduct business. The library truly is a community hub of engagement, discovery and learning. We implemented two LSTA grants awarded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Our “Equal Access for All” grant was developed in order to expand library services for people with physical and intellectual challenges. This initiative exemplifies the unique role of public libraries in their communities -- equal access, equal opportunities and equal rights for all citizens to access books, information, technology and programs. Grant funds totaling $9,889 made it possible to purchase new technologies that assist people with sight and auditory challenges; implement new collections and programs for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and expand outreach efforts to increase awareness of new library resources. It is fair to say that the Paul Pratt Memorial Library is now the “go-to” library in this area for those challenged by disabilities.

Along with the Weymouth, Scituate and Hingham libraries, we were awarded $21,375 for "All Aboard, Greenbush!: One Train, One Book," an outreach initiative to connect the daily riders of the Greenbush Commuter Line to their local libraries. Our book selection, The Race Underground: Boston, New York, and the Incredible Rivalry That Built America’s First Subway by Doug Most, chronicles the competition between two brothers from one of the nation’s great families -- Henry Melville Whitney of Boston and William Collins Whitney of New York -- as they pursued
the dream of digging America's first subway. Henry Whitney summered in Cohasset, and so a collaboration with the Cohasset Historical Society (CHS) on this grant project resulted in an outstanding CHS exhibit of historical archives. Although it wasn’t possible to determine how many of the participating commuters read the book, there were 1,430 total checkouts and 500 people attended 24 programs. We are pleased that Overdrive, one of the major eBook platforms, is promoting All Aboard, Greenbush! nationally as an innovative library program.

The problem of “fake news” and/or “post truth” information consumption dominated the news media this year. According to data published by the Pew Research Center, a majority of U.S. adults are getting their news in real time from their social media feeds rather than from news media outlets or vetted information sources. This growing problem underscores the value of libraries as trusted organizations staffed with information professionals.

This year, there were 8,271 information searches in our electronic research collections which include the highest quality general reference, genealogy, business, language, and news & media databases. We were excited to develop a new website, creating a new “library online” which makes it possible to use a lot of resources from home or office: search databases; place a hold on a book; reserve a meeting room; sign up for programs; reserve a book kit for your book discussion group; etc. Annual checkouts of reading materials, DVDs, audiobooks & digital content totalled 150,188 items this year. Our Red Hot Reads, a collection of in-demand new books which can only be checked out in person, were such a big hit we continue to enlarge the collection. And, with the objective of helping patrons find what they are looking for more easily, we added descriptive subject descriptions to our book stack aisles.
Children’s Room

**Storybook Quilt:** This year, the library received a very special gift from Betsy Millard, Cohasset resident for forty-two years. Betsy demonstrated her love of literature and of the library by creating a unique and gorgeous handcrafted quilt. To promote the value of reading she added this famous line from the Dr. Seuss book, “Oh, The Places You’ll Go”: “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn the more places you will go.”

Children’s Librarian Sharon Moody suggested swapping out a handful of classic characters for contemporary favorites loved by today’s youth. Beloved characters - the Very Hungry Caterpillar, Gerald and Piggy, and the mouse from “If You Give a Mouse a Cookie” - have taken the place of traditional icons such as Corduroy, Babar, and the Velveteen Rabbit. But old favorites are present, including Curious George, Peter Rabbit, the Cat in the Hat, and Winnie the Pooh.

**Boston Bruins PJ Drive:** Our first pajama drive for the Boston Bruins, coordinated by the MA Board of Library Commissioners, was a great success! We collected 71 pairs of pajamas for babies, children and teens. More than 10,598 children & caregivers attended children’s programs this year.

**Key events:** 176 participants in “On Your Mark, Get Set, Read!”, nation-wide summer reading program; Weekly storytime and craft sessions; Weekly music with Mamasteph; Puppet Story Time with Leigh and Friends; Reading Partners Program featuring Sophie our therapy dog; LEGO® Club for aspiring engineers; Early Release and Vacation Day STEM programs ages 4 - 10.
YA Room

This year, 902 teens and tweens attended programs including a wide variety of STEM (science, technology, engineering & math) offerings. We continue to expand STEM programming in support of 21st century education and workforce skills development. Members of our Teen Advisory Board (TAB) meet monthly to help plan programs and make suggestions for the collection.

As part of our All Aboard Greenbush! Program offerings, Cohasset fifth graders were treated to a visit by Joe McKendry who spoke about his book, *Beneath the Streets of Boston: Building America’s First Subway.* McKendry, who both writes and illustrates his books, demonstrated his drawing talent and spoke about the digging of the subway. Students were fascinated by the compelling and historically accurate narrative of Boston’s first “Big Dig” and the stories of workers who dug miles of tunnels by hand.

Homework Center

We are very grateful to the 2016-2017 National Honor Society Tutors who assisted students at our Homework Center. These wonderful teenagers serve as great role models and are dedicated to helping their peers with homework.

2016 - 2017 NHS Tutors : Lili Astino; Joe Campedelli; Brigie Driscoll; Emma Humphrey; Michael Iantosca; Eva Kears; Sophie Matthews; Emma Morris; Liam O’Connell; Xander Schubert; Drew Skolnick; Yvette Wenner.
Reference & Adult Services

The reference staff fielded 2,275 queries in Fiscal Year 2017 by email, telephone or in person. Many of the questions were fairly routine while others required more in-depth research to answer. Patrons utilizing the reference desk services needed help with reader’s advisory, sought assistance using their portable devices, and requested help in locating unique materials. Other inquiries were for details of local history, accessing library services online, proctoring exams, and genealogy information. We guided patrons on how to use the library’s e-resources, such as *Overdrive*, *Hoopla*, and *Zinio*, and other digital collections.

In addition to helping patrons use technology and navigate online resources, staff was enlisted to assist patrons using new adaptive tech tools purchased with our *Equal Access for All* grant funds. The desktop video monitor, touch-screen speech-to-text station and assistive listening devices are now valued library resources enabling sight and hearing challenged persons to fully use information resources.

More than 950 people attended our adult programming events which consisted of Open Book Hour, workshops, movie screenings, book group discussions, Great Decisions foreign policy discussion groups, Sunday Author Talks, and a new documentary film series. Anyone interested in recommending a program is invited to fill out a program suggestion form on our website, [www.cohassetlibrary.org](http://www.cohassetlibrary.org).
The Friends support the mission of the Paul Pratt Memorial Library through ongoing fundraising and advocacy to enhance library resources and programming and to provide community outreach services. The Friends is a 501(c)3 organization, eligible for matching contributions from many corporations. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. In addition, the Friends periodically undertake special projects for which volunteers may be needed. We encourage all to volunteer!

This year, the Friends invested a total of $23,128 in the library -- funding the majority of library programs for all ages, the library's museum pass program, and our Homework Center, which offers free tutoring by members of the Cohasset High School Honor Society. Friends volunteers bring library resources to Sunrise of Cohasset and to Golden Living Center and meet with residents for book discussion groups.

Friends Board: Jessica Patterson, President; Linda Fechter, Vice President, Publicity and Program Committee; Barbara Wrenn, Treasurer, Program Committee and Fundraising; Debbie Avila, Volunteer Coordinator and Home Delivery Service; Lanier Grassie, Outreach Coordinator; Annjean Moody, Book Donations; Sandra Perry, Outreach; Maurajane Rogers, Corresponding Secretary & Jacqueline Rafferty, Library Director.
Cohasset Library Trust, Inc.

The Cohasset Library Trust, Inc. (CLT) was established in 2006 to increase the library's endowment and prudently manage its investments. Elected library trustees appoint the Trust's Board of Directors who in turn appoint an Investment Advisory Committee to manage the endowment. Each year the endowment grants the library funds to purchase books. The grant amount is based on the most recent four-quarter average value of the endowment. The FY17 grant was $58,103.61.

Board members: Michael Putziger, President; Paula Linhares, Treasurer; Mary Whitley, Clerk; Steve Brown, Jane Goedcke, Grace Evans, Marylou Lawrence, Ronnie McMorris, Jim Sandell, Beth Tarpey, Patience Towle.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Rafferty, Library Director

Carolyn Coffey, Trustee Chair Lynne DeGiacomo Agnes McCann
Elaine Breslow David Dwyer Catherine O’Callaghan
Stephen Brown Marylou Lawrence Sarah Pease