

J. V. FLETCHER LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

Ellen Rainville, Library
Director

Massachusetts Public Library Construction Project Grant:

Since 2011, Library staff, the Library Facility Needs Committee, and the Library Trustees Board have worked to poise the municipality for a Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Massachusetts *Public Library Construction Project Grant* application which was submitted in 2017. The Town of Westford was waitlisted in FY22 [at number 5], in line for \$7,851,944 million in grant funds. This award rests upon state funding, Town review and future Town votes in favor of proceeding with this project. In May 2022, the Town learned that the Division of Administration and Finance had appropriated additional funds for the Library Construction Program and that Westford's provisional grant award notification would be made one year early in July 2022. The future design devotes almost all new space to the public and to the residents who use it most. The Library design:



- More than doubles the space for children, and offers a discreet separate area
- Triples space for young adults and emerging adults
- Doubles public meeting spaces (booked 6 x day)
- Centralizes Circulation functions
- Increases silent, tutorial and collaborative study options
- Offers improved technology and spaces to accommodate future trends and uses
- Offers improved traffic flow and increased parking
- Is fully handicapped-accessible and meets current fire, safety, ventilation and building codes

The Westford Library has a strong history of gifts, donations, benefactors and grants:

- 1797 – Original Social Library founded by 25 citizens
- 1859 – Social Library donated to the Town
- 1873 – Agricultural Library donated to the Town
- 1895 – Jonathan Varnum Fletcher donated 75% of the funds to build a new library on the Common
- 1963 – Basement Children's Room funded by J. V. Fletcher's great grand-daughter Marian F. Winnek
- 1969 – Renovation/addition funded by federal LSCA Title II grant
- 1979 – Bookmobile funded by federal LSCA Title I grant
- 1988 – Renovation/addition awarded Massachusetts Public Library Construction Project (MPLCP) grant award
- 2007-2012 – Library Beautification funded by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc.
- 2017 – Westford wait listed for MPLCP grant award of almost \$8 million
- 2023, January 9 – Deadline for Westford to approve project and accept grant

"You make a difference to many people's lives, especially mine." Library Patron

Return to "New Normal":

Prior to June 1, 2021 library staff delivered over 25,000 curbside pickups to the rear entry and covered the equivalent distance of walking to Pittsburgh PA. FY 22 represented the first full year of a return to "new normal" service (with the delayed return of meeting room use) and a number of COVID offerings became permanent new services.

New FY 22 services included:

- *Assabet and CANVA Software*
- *Proquest: US Newstream*
- *Grab 'n Go Bundles, Craft Kits, Book Club Bags, Make and Take Bags*
- *Outdoor Friend's Book Sale*
- *All-Library Friends Book Sale*
- *Circulating HotSpots*



Youth Programs: Exciting and new Youth Services programming in FY 2022 included:

- *Elementary Book Clubs*
- *Monthly Crafternoons*
- *Weekly Mother Goose*
- *Fresh Start Foods Gardens*
- *Virtual Passover Storytime*
- *FROZEN, with Elsa*
- *Twelve-Noon New Year's Eve Celebration*
- *Animal Craze Traveling Farm at Climate Change Event*

*"Thank you for your wonderful New Year's celebration (i.e. 12 noon New Year's Eve)! You ladies are so much fun and bring so much joy to our family. We are so grateful to have such an amazing children's room staff! **Library Patron***

Adult programming continued its monthly Book Groups and Clubs in an all-virtual format, with the *Library Book Discussion Group*, the *Monday Mystery Book Club*, and the *Non-fiction Book Club*, as well as the *Westford Job Seekers Network* meeting weekly. Thirty-three neighborhood and library and library/school book groups were supported by the Inter-Library Loan department. Westford Job Seekers Network held its last meeting on February 9, feting librarian Dina Kanabar after 13 years of free weekly programs attended by 16,387 Job Seekers. Westford Library will be collaborating with other Merrimack Valley libraries in offering bi-weekly 50+ *Job Seekers Programs* into the future. Adult programs — primarily virtual throughout FY 2022 — included:

- 📖 *Discover India Series*
- 📖 *Financial Literacy*
- 📖 *Irish Genealogy*
- 📖 *Climate Change Conversation*
- 📖 *Virtual Beatrix Potter*
- 📖 *Tuskegee Airmen*
- 📖 *Spring Cleaning: Feng Shui approach*
- 📖 *James Webb Telescope*

*"I was a job seeker for the first time last year after a 30 year accounting career. You group and the networking was key for me to get back on my feet."... "You have helped hundreds of thousands of people over the years with your meetings..." **Westford Job Seeker Attendees***

Make & Take Crafternoons

Monthly
Mondays
3:30-4:30

The three Summer Reading Programs (child, tween and adult) netted 1,468 registrants from June 2021 through August 2021 for the state-wide reading theme of: *Tails and Tales*. This summer read-fest — funded by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc. and the Massachusetts Library System — continued the experiment with a virtual, remote and outdoor Summer Reading Programs. We thank here the *Westford Public Schools and Westford Academy* for the loan of outdoor staging through the summer of 2021, and we thank the Select Board for approving ARPA funds for our own outdoor staging for the hosting of safe, distanced, outdoor events.

Gift- and Grant-Funded Initiatives and Awards:

In FY 2022, the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library Inc. provided almost \$20,000 in book and new format funds, and one-half of the Library's MVLC annual membership was paid from the State Aid to Public Libraries account. The Library thanks those gracious donors who gave to the Friends' 2021 Fall Appeal campaign to fundraise and to supplement Town funds for new media, downloadable collections and technology purchases, which provided critical remote access to titles during the entirety of the fiscal year. The Friends are also thanked for three highly-creative Book Sales this past year, for funding multiple museum passes, all library programming, the annual Wishlist and for ALL the ways their support expands and enhances daily Library service.



We thank the Westford Garden Club for underwriting the gift of passes to the *Tower Hill Botanic Garden* facility in Boylston and for adorning the Library's Main Street entrance all year round with such phenomenal plantings! The Library and families of Westford thank the KDK Foundation (Kurt Kelly Hockey Memorial Fund) for funding the fun-filled virtual summer Harry Potter Trivia program and December's Mini-Golf Tournament! We also thank Heather Monahan for the 9-month display of 3,000+ Origami Cranes hung for the 20th anniversary

of 9/11. Over many months, these paper cranes were shared with the public, as were – later – “U-cranes.” We thank Gail Flannery for the hand-created Victorian Doll House, which has enraptured youngsters and adults alike! Finally, we thank *Link to Literacy* headed by Elizabeth Elliott, for pivoting to a virtual format as social distancing remained in place. Nancy Boutet and the Youth Services Division won the *Coveted Roudenbowl* for the “*Into the Woods*” Apple Blossom parade entry, as well as *Second Place* in the *Festival of Trees* for their Captain Underpants Christmas Tree!



Facility Maintenance, FY 2022:

The following library maintenance issues were addressed:

- Two failed Heat Pumps were replaced – thanks to the support of the Finance Committee
- Roof Repairs occurred over the Mary Atwood Hall
- Safety and security procedures and initiatives were introduced per the *Town School Safety Task Force*

We thank here the *Facilities, Highway and Parks and Grounds Departments* for their support and assistance throughout the year, especially for help replacing a non-working outdoor pole light on the front sidewalk.

Administration, Professional Development and Town Civic Activity:

Library staff continued to be professionally active, with Director Ellen Rainville serving as MVLC Treasurer and on the MLA Executive Board:

- ALA (American Library Association)
- MLA (Massachusetts Library Association)
- MSLA (Massachusetts School Library Association)
- MVLC (Merrimack Valley Library Consortium)
- NELA (New England Library Association)

- TEEN Summit
- PLA (Public Library Association)
- YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association)
- Virtual School Library Journal Day of Dialog
- Virtual Library Journal Day of Dialog
- Virtual School Library Journal Middle Grade Magic
- Westford Records and Archive Committee

Library Staffing FY 2022:

Director — Ellen D. Rainville

Asst. Director — Kristina Leedberg

Senior Librarians:

Head of Youth Services — Nancy Boutet

Systems/Head of Technical Services — Dina Kanabar

Head of Reference & Information Services — Sarah Regan (*resigned 6/11/22*)

Head of Circulation — Holly Sheridan-Pritchard

Staff Librarians:

ILL/Serials Librarian — Charles Schweppe

Young Adult Specialist — Jess Dymant

Local History/Genealogist — Virginia Moore

Head Cataloger — Alla Brovina

Substitute — Sandy Kelly

Library Associates:

Cataloger/Data Entry — Lauren Evans

Fine Arts Librarian/Acquisitions — Carol McCahon

Juvenile Reference/Program Assistants — Ellen Apicco; Jacki Dibble; Jennifer Hamilton (*resigned 4/27/22*); Jen Petro-Roy

Circulation and Reader's Advisory — Laura Fowler (*resigned 6/28/22*); Mayleen

Kelley; Judy Madsen; Heather Marquez; Jeanne Millet; Heather Nevits; Deborah

Santoro (*resigned 6/8/22*); Christine Steinhauer (*resigned 8/12/21*); Chantale Shepard

Substitute — Lawrence Bentley; Quinn Dolan; Lisa Navarro

Library Technicians:

Order and Acquisition Receiving — Susan Blanchette

Inter-Library Loan Support — Sara Morton; Bari Pender;

Maintenance Worker I and II — Robert Otto; Joseph Burke

Office Manager — Amy Spadano

Library Pages (3)

Capstone Volunteer: We had the pleasure of working with WA Senior, Emma Glynn over the course of 5 weeks to complete her Capstone Internship.

Volunteers (4)

*"Talk about superior and "over and above" customer/client service?!?! Wonderful, helpful, positive, CONNECTING, interesting and cheerful staffers all. J. V. Fletcher folks make that building the heart of Westford, and its far & wide reach the soul of our town." **Library Patron***



*"I love this library! And how you have books for all ages. Me and my brothers come here all the time and they say they love the library." **Library Tween Patron***

*"Love going to this library —your staff are so helpful and very knowledgeable and kind. Thank you for all you do." **Library Patron***