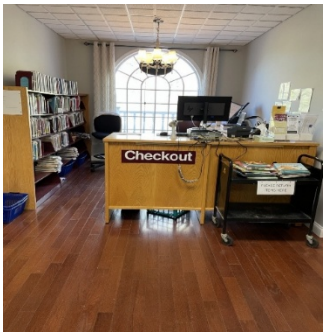
J. V. FLETCHER LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

Ellen Rainville, Library Director

This FY 2026 Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of late Library Associate Mayleen Kelley who, during her nineteen years' tenure, offered stellar Reader's Advisory service to the readers of Westford. We celebrate Holly Sheridan-Pritchard as well, Head of Circulation, who retired after a quarter-century, and Homebound Librarian Judy Madsen – retiring after twenty-three years of service.

Having moved the contents of the 22,500 sq. foot Main Library to the 12,500 sq. ft. temporary site at 515 Groton Road, FY 2026 saw a full year of public library service offered from its temporary home as progress continued on the ongoing library renovation and addition project. While certain critical library operations necessarily were offered off-site due to the space limitations of the temporary site – Meeting Room use, programming for all ages, and collection stack browsing – nonetheless, a full array of library services was offered, supported by collaboration with other Town departments, agencies, non-profits and our sister libraries. We are grateful to the patrons who have followed us to Groton Road, grateful to the sister libraries hosting our patrons elsewhere and we avidly look forward to the resumption of library operations in the new building in late winter, early Spring 2027!



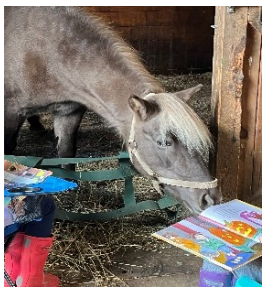
Temporary Site at 515 Groton Road

Youth, Teen & Adult FY 2026 Program Highlights:

Library Programs and Services were offered for all ages in FY 2026 – with brief Highlights below!

- *New MVLC App*
- *Transparent Language Database*
- *KevTech's Digital Art for Kids*
- *Plenty of Pancakes Storytime*
- *Strega Mama Storytimes*
- *New Museun Pass: American History Museum*
- *Crafternoons: such as Felted Toad Stools*
- *Winnie the Pooh 100th Anniversary Story Times*
- *50+ Job Seekers' Networking Group*
- *How Librarians Became the Unlikely Spies of WW II*
- *Burglary at the Louvre!*
- *Life Lessons from the Happiest People on Earth*
- *Thoreau's God*
- *Book Groups; Book Clubs and Author Talks*

Reading to Ponies at Good Pickin' Farm





Three exciting *Summer Reading Programs* for children, teens and adults were held in the summer of 2025, all based upon "*Alice in Wonderland*" -- *Mad About Reading, Down the Rabbit Hole* and *Through the Looking Glass*! Almost 850 readers of all ages registered for the three Summer Reading Programs which are funded by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc. and the Massachusetts Library System. We thank here the Public Works, Facilities and Recreation Departments, the Westford Public Schools, the Town beach staff, First Parish Church United, St. Marks Episcopal Church, Good Pickin' Farm and all our supporters and partners who provided locations for programs and who helped prove that every age in Westford is MAD ABOUT READING!



Apple Blosson Paraade Entry, 2025

Library Building Project: The steady progress of the Library Addition and Renovation Project is due solely to the dedicated parties donating time, hours, expertise and professional rigor to an incredibly complex project: *the Board of Library Trustees, the Permanent Town Building Committee, the Town Manager's Office, Library Administration, Finegold Alexander Architects, CHA Solutions and Hutter Construction Corporation.* With the committed fund raising of the Friends' Foundation Committee (see below) – all parties are working together to realize the best possible future library for Westford.

Gift- and Grant-Funded Initiatives, Earmarks and Awards: FY 2026 saw a year of unique funding, as the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library Inc. focused solely on their Library Fund-raising initiative and the Town municipal budget paid for all collection, database, network membership and technology purchases, as the Library operating budget was impacted by the rental of offsite lodgings paid for by the Library Building Project budget. We thank here the Friends' Foundation Committee for their inspired continuing fund-raising which is nearing its stated $1.3 million target with the goal of helping defray the cost of the new Library building to the Westford campaign, we thank the many generous donors who have elected to have spaces in the future library bear their name or have chosen this generous option to remember and celebrate loved ones. We thank the Westford Garden Club for underwriting the gift of passes to the *Tower Hill Botanic Garden* facility in Boylston and for continuing to grace the temporary Library with monthly bouquets! As this year saw a significant literary landmark, we would like to thank Ellen Harde for hosting – at the Winnie the Pooh House at 39 Main Street! – more than one transporting story time in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the Winnie the Pooh books! We thank the KDK Foundation for sponsoring multiple programs this past year – "Farm on the Go" and Good Pickin' Farm, "Strega Mama Story Time", and "Eyes on Owls.!" We also thank the many supporters of our Summer Reading Program events and raffles, who donated prizes and gift certificates for our dedicated readers. Finally, here, we also extend deep thanks to our supportive state legislators — advocating for all things library — Representative James Arciero and Senator John Cronin for securing $150,000 in legislative support for the Library Building Project. Also we thank the Community Preservation Committee and Annual Town Meeting voters for their supportive vote to fund the restoration of the original Library skylight (covered since the 1969 renovation) via a Community Preservation Act award in the amount of $60,000.





Mary Atwood Hall Skylight

Library Operations:
As with other Town Departments responding to the fiscal impact of the failed ovverride, the Library in FY 2026 again provided reduced evening and Saturday hours and froze certain vacant positions to meet the retrenchment budget necessitated by this vote. As a result, the municipality of Westford had to apply for a waiver of the *Municipal Approrpiation Requirement* from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for a second year in a row -- a critical standard tied to public library certification in the Commonwealth, which allows Massachusetts residents to use all libraries in the Commonwealth. As we enter FY 2027 with a population over 25,000, we will meet this critical state standard and we anticipate the steady expansion of hours through FY 2030 (an additional state standard), as expanded and enhanced services resume in the future new library. We are steadily preparing for our return to 50 Main Street – counting inches of collections, re-classifying collections, re-drafting Job Descriptions and Policies, inventorying technology and office contents, and planning to enlarge the *Library of Things* – thanks to the generosity of the *Westford Recycling Commission* and "*100 Women Who Care — Greater Westford."* With runner trips to the closed stacks cresting 9,000, we look forward to the return to 50 Main Street where we can again offer open stacks, Programming spaces, multiple Meeting spaces, study space and enlarged public areas for all ages.



Stuffy Sleepover at the Library

Administration, Professional Development and Town Civic Activity:
Library staff continued to be professionally active in the following professional organizations. Additionally, Library administration and the Board of Trustees continued to advocate for Commonwealth legislation increasing access to fairly priced eBooks and all books.

- ALA (American Library Association)
- MLA (Massachusetts Library Association)

- MVLC (Merrimack Valley Library Consortium)
- NELA (New England Library Association)
- PLA (Public Library Association)
- YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association)
- Virtual Library Journal Day of Dialog

> *"Being part of this networking group gave me the encouragement and direction I needed to make this move."* ***Library Job Seeker Attendee***

Library Staffing FY 2026:
Director — Ellen D. Rainville
Asst. Director — Kristina Leedberg
Senior Librarians:
Head of Youth Services — Jenn Buliszak (*hired 9/2/25*)
Systems/Head of Technical Services — Dina Kanabar
Head of Reference & Information Services — Linda Ernick
Head of Circulation — Holly Sheridan-Pritchard *(retired 7/7/25)*; Megan Carney (*hired 8/29/25*)
Staff Librarians:
ILL/Serials Librarian — Bari Pender (*promoted 7/28/25)*
Young Adult Specialist — Alexis Chrobak
Local History/Genealogist — Charles Rose-Schweppe
Head Cataloger — Alla Brovina
Substitute — Sandy Kelly

> *"So grateful for our local library and the incredible staff that so clearly love what they do!"* ***Library Patron***

Library Associates:
Cataloger/Data Entry — Lauren Evans
Fine Arts Librarian/Acquisitions — Jeanne Millet
Juvenile Reference/Program Assistants — Hannah Oliver*;* Jill Sirois (*resigned 10/23/25*); Julie Zeidman (*hired 3/2/26)*
Circulation and Reader's Advisory — Shannon Hagel; Katie Hoskinson-Burke (*hired 5/20/26);* Mayleen Kelley (*deceased*); Judy Madsen *(retired 1/5/26);* Jeanne Millet; Heather Nevits; Karla Pentedemos (*promoted 9/22/25)*; Melissa Seldon *(promoted 2/17/26*); Chantale Shepard
Substitute — Nicole Duarte (*hired 4/13/26);* Victoria-Lynn McLaughlin; Dawn Swanson (*hired 6/11/26)*
Library Technicians:
Order and Acquisition Receiving — Susan Blanchette
Inter-Library Loan Support —Diana Daniels; Lisa Navarro *(changed position 8/19/25)*
Substitute — None
Maintenance Worker I and II: Richard Trainor; *Vacant*
Office Manager: Heather Marquez
Library Pages (3)

