FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

There is a moment when something clicks for the first time – a spark, a connection that opens an entire universe of possibilities. My favorite part about working in a library is witnessing those “magic” moments, not only because we at the library see them regularly, but libraries actively set the stage for curiosity, imagination and the desire to become lifelong learners every day.

The Wellesley Free Library has a reputation for making magic. Our Library consistently earns the respect of neighboring library systems and is considered a role model in terms of staff, service, collection, and community programming. One sees the pride of Wellesley in its well cared for spaces. It is also clear that residents connect continued support of the library to continued success of the community.

Voters, volunteers and donors make magic possible. Together with Town funding, organizations like the Wellesley Free Library Foundation and the Friends of the Wellesley Free Libraries elevate all aspects of our offerings to the public. Programs such as ESL connect new English speakers with community tutors, school outreach connects elementary students with an introduction to the library, and expanded technology training connects all things electronic with all who want to know. Our enhanced collection connects readers to the newest materials and databases. Residents enjoy the ever-popular Museum Pass program to connect with other cultural and educational institutions.

As the new Director of the Wellesley Free Library, I look forward to connecting with the community to evaluate our evolving information and service needs and developing welcoming and efficient spaces that empower patrons to experience those “magic” moments at every library visit.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to maintain excellence and build connections in a community that is not only part of the library, but IS the library.

Jamie Jurgensen
Library Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE TRUSTEES

MAKING THE CONNECTION
that’s what the Wellesley Free Library is all about …

connecting patrons to resources and places near and far … fostering digital literacy to provide 21st century skills in our oldest to youngest citizens … providing a community gathering place with programs and opportunities to bring neighbors together to learn and enjoy! This past year has been one of new and continuing connections and, as you read through this Report to the Community, you will see the tremendous value the Wellesley community receives from its library.

A major new connection this year was the arrival of Jamie Jurgensen as our Library Director. Jamie has a wealth of experience and we look forward to the exciting ideas she brings to the WFL. New leadership, new programs, new resources – it has been a very good year at the WFL.

The accomplishments and the success of this past year come from another connection – donors who value and support the WFL each year through the WFL Foundation and the Friends of the WFL. Our programs, technology resources, branch libraries and much more are all made possible by the private funds provided by those who donate so generously. Gifts, large and small, are what allow the WFL to continue to grow and expand its strong connection with Wellesley and its residents.

Beth Sullivan Woods
Chair
Board of Library Trustees

The WFL has the 6th highest circulation in the state.

More than 743,337 items were checked out or renewed last year.

Every 4.5 seconds a Massachusetts resident sits down at a library computer.

Public computers at the WFL were used 49,312 times last year.

The WFL received the first ever ‘Stronger Together’ Award from the Massachusetts Library System (MLS). The WFL was recognized for a strong commitment to customers, for finding solutions to service needs, and for a long history of resource sharing within the MA Library System.

Americans visit a library 3 times more than they go to the movies.

Of the 43 libraries in the Minuteman Library Network, Wellesley was the 5th busiest.

For every tax dollar invested in public libraries, there is an average return of more than $4 in benefits to patrons, the community and the economy.

September is National Library Card Sign-up Month.

17,733
Wellesley residents have library cards.

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Amanda Henshon
Ann Howley
Ann-Mara Lanza
Marla Robinson
Jessica Wolfe
Beth Sullivan Woods

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MAKING THE CONNECTION beyond the pages

OUTREACH TO OUR SCHOOLS
WFL Children’s librarians work with public and private schools throughout the year to provide resources to support the curricula. Visits to younger grades happen in the fall, and outreach this spring focused on Making the Connection to Middle School for 5th grade students. After a presentation highlighting the WFL’s Youth Room, summer programming for 11-14 year olds and the variety of material formats and media options (like OverDrive and hoopla) available at the WFL, students discussed choosing a required summer reading book – a first-time assignment for some. The students received an information packet including a library card application, schedule of events specific to middle-schoolers, and a “cheat sheet” for navigating OverDrive. While a portion of outreach programming is included in the WFL’s impact budget, support from the WFL Foundation allows for a broader outreach effort.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
Twenty-one percent of MA homes speak a language other than English. To help Wellesley’s increasingly diverse population Make the Connection, the library hosts Wellesley ESL for people who live or work in Wellesley. With more than 120 students representing 28 different countries, the program’s 60 volunteers offer 18 different small-group classes and one-on-one tutoring. The WFL ESL Coordinator took a leadership role in organizing a “Metro-West Coordinators” group as a way to share resources. Wellesley ESL is entirely privately funded, largely by the WFL Foundation with additional support from The Fund for Wellesley, Wellesley Hills Junior Women’s Club, World Care, the well-attended series provided a unique opportunity to Make the Connection to Wellesley neighbors.

DIGITAL LITERACY AT WFL
Understanding the accelerating technology needs of our residents, the WFL offers an expanded array of courses in Jackie’s Room, our technology training center. Popular this year was a series of courses designed to help small business owners Make the Connection through digital marketing vehicles like Hootsuite, Mailchimp, WordPress and Instagram. Also well attended were courses that help residents navigate and connect with their smartphones and tablets including favorites like “What’s so Great about Apps Anyway.” With support from the WFL Foundation, the library is able to offer more than 25 technology courses per month.

Wellesley Reads Together
Wellesley Reads Together is a town-wide program which invites participants to Make the Connection by reading the same book. Last fall, WFL and MassBay Community College partnered for a community read of Into the Beautiful North by Alberto Urrea. CULMINATING IN OCTOBER, THE 3RD ANNUAL WELLESLEY READS TOGETHER INVITED RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A BOOK DISCUSSION AT THE MAIN LIBRARY, ATTEND A MASSBAY FACULTY PANEL PRESENTATION AND ENJOY A LECTURE BY MASSBAY PROFESSOR MARGARET CROVE. DETAILS ON THIS FALL’S READ ON P. 12.

OUTREACH TO OUR SCHOOLS
Wellesley Media Corporation presented the WFL Foundation with a check for $70,000 to turn the Wakelin Room, the main library’s primary public meeting space, into a facility with state-of-the-art digital studio capability. The upgraded system provides better transmission and filming capability, so that Wellesley Cable viewers can Make the Connection via Wakelin Room programs and events broadcast on TV and streamed online. Wellesley Media continues to share its expertise through workshops offered as part of WFL technology training programs on topics such as “Shooting A Great Video on Your Mobile Device” or “Digital Editing on Your Mobile Device” or “Digital Editing.”

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A MESSAGE FROM WFL FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

Thank you to all who donated to the WFL Foundation this year. Your donations help make our library a vibrant community resource and a leader among libraries in Massachusetts.

The Library Trustees established the WFL Foundation in 2008. It is now an essential partner in raising private funds to enhance our library, supplementing core library services funded by our town budget. Funds raised through the Foundation support a variety of community services like the ESL and outreach programs as well as improving technology resources including the introduction of Apple products and support for programs in the technology lab. The library’s collection has been greatly enriched by the Foundation’s Centennial Fund Endowment used to purchase specialized databases, new and innovative audio-visual materials, and increased print offerings. Foundation funds continue to support the operation of the Hills and Fells branch libraries.

The success of the Foundation is due to the generosity of individuals, families and local businesses. Support for special events like our Gala and Library Mini-Golf - both happening again - as well as contributions to our Annual Fund show the value that our citizens place on their library and the willingness of so many to contribute to the Foundation’s work to help the library Make the Connection with its community.

This is my last message as President of the Board. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve the library. Thank you to our hard-working Board of Directors, Director of Development Jennifer Siedman, the Library Trustees, and Library Director Jamie Jorgensen whose leadership is invaluable in keeping the WFL at the forefront of public libraries. Welcome to Darcey Bartel, our new President, who will continue the good work of the WFL Foundation.

Pamela Stirrat
Pamela Stirrat
President, WFL Foundation

A HOLE LOT OF FUN!

Wellesley may have been buried under a record amount of snow this winter, but spring was in the air at the Main library on February 28th and March 1st! The WFL Foundation welcomed more than 550 people to its first-ever miniature golf fundraising event, “A Hole Lot of Fun.” With 18 uniquely decorated holes winding through the stacks and down the stairs on both sides of the library, raffle prizes, and even a “19th hole” with food and family fun, golfers of all ages enjoyed a bit of summer fun in the middle of the winter. Thanks to the generous support of 32 local businesses and organizations “A Hole Lot of Fun” raised more than $22,000.

GOLF AGAIN JANUARY 30, 2016

WFL CIRCULATION DESK HAS A NEW NAME

When you check out your books at the Main Library this fall, you will do so at the Ellen and Melvin Gordon Circulation Desk. Continuing years of generous giving to the WFL, Ellen and her late husband, Melvin, made an extraordinarily generous gift of $1,500,000 to the WFL Foundation this past winter through their family foundation. Previously, the Gordons supported the building of the new Main Library by funding the “Tootsie Roll Room” in the Children’s Area.

Known to many in town as the “Tootsie Roll” family, the Gordons have had close ties to the Wellesley community for many years. The Gordons have four daughters all of whom grew up in Wellesley. At the time of his death in January 2015, Melvin had been associated with Tootsie Roll Industries for 53 years and he and Ellen had been married for almost 65 years. Formerly serving as president and chief operating officer, Ellen now serves as chairman and CEO succeeding her husband. The Gordons are well known in philanthropic circles for their generosity and foresight in supporting important institutions. It is extremely gratifying that they have chosen to support the WFL at such an extraordinary, leadership level.

“Our gift to the WFL is a reflection of our belief in the enduring importance of public libraries as institutions to connect, engage, and explore. This gift represents our family’s longtime commitment to ensuring the Wellesley Free Library has the resources needed to continue its extraordinary work,” remarked Mrs. Gordon.

The gift will strengthen the WFL Foundation’s ability to support the library for many years to come and more immediately, provide funding for projects currently being explored by the new director including evolving service and program needs as well as space utilization.

The WFL and the entire WFL community are most grateful to the Gordons for their generosity and support.

Ellen Gordon

I cannot think of a more essential community resource to support than the Wellesley Free Library. The heart of the community, this library has played an important role in our family. From our earliest visits for story time to our daughters’ time volunteering, the library’s welcoming staff, excellent resources, and outstanding programming have enriched our lives immeasurably.

Friends of the WFL
Make the Connection

Library patrons of all ages enjoy programs supported by the Friends of the WFL. Popular choices include concerts, lectures on a wide variety of topics and programs for children from preschool through school age. The Friends continue to fund the fish tank as well as the museum pass program which allows patrons to visit local museums and other attractions at a free or reduced rate.

Support the Friends of the WFL by joining the over 200 lifetime and 160 active members.

To learn more about becoming a member of the Friends, visit www.friendsofwellesleyfreelibrary.org

Friends of the WFL

BOOK SALES SUPPORT THE WFL

Shop the Friends’ used books sales throughout the year. These sales are well known for their excellent quality and annually provide much of the support given by the Friends. Visit the ongoing Friends sale in the Hills and Main libraries, or pick up a great read at the Fall Book Sale. Donate your gently used books at the main library.
The Wellesley Free Library wishes to recognize our community who through their generosity and commitment ensure our library remains a leader among libraries.

FOR COURTANTS

JUNE 1, 2013 • 7:00 AM

PHILANTHROPIC GIVING AT THE W.H. NEWSWELL FUND

This gift was made possible by the W.H. Newswell Fund, a foundation established by the W.H. Newswell Foundation. The W.H. Newswell Foundation is a private foundation supported by annual gifts from individuals and families who wish to increase their giving to the library. For more information about the development of our library, please contact the Development Office at 781-237-1610 x127.
For the WFL Free Libraries
OUR MISSION
The WFL mission is to serve as a community gathering place, a cultural destination, and a gateway to ideas for residents of all ages and interests. Through books, media, technology, and innovative programs, the Wellesley Free Library provides free and convenient access to information both within and beyond our walls.

READ
2015 WELLESLEY READS TOGETHER
The Hanging Judge by Michael Ponsor.
Hear Ponsor speak on October 27, 2015

PLAY
Miniature golf on January 30-31st at the Main Library. It’s “A HOLE LOT OF FUN”

ATTEND
THE WFL FOUNDATION GALA
Featuring Doris Kearns Goodwin
March 31, 2016

SUPPORT
A FRIENDS BOOKSALE
September 17th - 20th • February 4th – 7th
April 28th & May 1st