

2008 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
OF THE THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Chair: Emily J. Rose
Vice-Chair: Frank MacGrory
Secretary: Frank Streeter
Member: John Schumacher-Hardy
Member: Michael Lukaszewicz
Member: Stephanné Fiori

DIRECTOR: Joseph J. Mulé
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/ADULT SERVICES: Anne White
LIBRARIAN:
CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN: Susan Mello-Conroy
SENIOR LIBRARY TECHNICIAN: Linda Ledoux
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT: Marcia L. Jakubowicz
LIBRARY TECHNICIAN: Janet Baylis
LIBRARY PAGE: Janet Baylis
LIBRARY PAGE: Sandy Altucher
LIBRARY PAGE: Lisa D'Ambrosio
LIBRARY PAGE: Dorothy McCandless
CUSTODIAN: Nancy Record
SENIOR MUSEUM CLERK: Cecilia Thurlow*
MUSEUM CLERK: Donald Boucher*
ADULT SERVICES ASSISTANT: Rosanne Columbo*

Hours:

01 January 2008 – 30 June 2008

Monday: 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Wednesday 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Thursday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (closed on Saturdays, June - August)

30 June 2008 – 31 December 2008

Monday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Wednesday 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Thursday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Friday: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (open throughout the year)

In the 147th year of service to the residents of Lancaster, the Thayer Memorial Library witnessed another year of growth in services as well as increases in service hours and staff. In January, the

Board of Library Trustees (Trustees) submitted FY2008 BUDGET ACTION PROPOSAL: TO INCREASE LIBRARY BUDGET TO SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN PUBLIC SERVICE AND STAFF HOURS to the Board of Selectmen and Town Finance Committee for consideration. In addition to asking for 30 more page hours, the Library increased service hours over 25%, which included Friday hours as well as being open on Saturdays throughout the year. Given the dramatic growth of Library use over the past few years, the Town approved the request, effective on July 1, 2008.

Budget

Over the calendar year 2008, the Library again operated in a budget environment that was relatively stable and without event. From January to June, the Library worked on the final 6 months of FY2008's municipal appropriation. Likewise, from July to December, the Library operated on the first six months of FY2009's municipal appropriation. Table 1 illustrates the Library's total operating municipal appropriations for each *fiscal* year, affecting the *calendar* year 2008.

In FY2008, an increase in appropriation was realized due in large part to maintaining staffing levels, negotiating a new contract with the Director, and operating and maintaining various building systems (fire suppression, HVAC, etc.). However, over 50% of the total increase was generated from rapid and steep increases in fuel and electric expenditures. Although staffing expenses rose over 17%, the outcome of implementing new services hours, the FY2009 appropriation actually decreased due to a Town plan centralizing energy and utility expenditures which took energy costs out of the Library's budget,

Table 1

Fiscal Year	Months Utilized in Calendar 2008	Total Fiscal Year Municipal Appropriation	Δ% from Previous Fiscal Year
FY2008	Jan. to June	259,432	9.70%
FY2009	July to Dec.	252,165	-2.80%

Furthermore, the Library was able to meet all budget-related requirements as outlined in 605 CMR 4.00: M.G.L. c. 78, ss.19A and 19B in FY2008 and is anticipated to do so, as well, in FY2009. As a result of meeting all of the Commonwealth's requirements for public library service, the Library received an FY2008 State award of \$10,988, a 9% increase in State funds from FY2007's. In contrast, the initial FY2009 State Aid Award is \$6,329, a decrease of 42% since the year prior.

Highlights for meeting MBLC requirement over the course of calendar 2008 include:

- Maintaining the Library's Minimum Appropriation Requirement (MAR) provided by the Town for both fiscal years.
- Sustaining 38 hours (Jan. to June) and 49 (July to Dec.) of public service per week.

- Spending at least 19% of total operating expenditures on purchasing books and other informational materials. Over FY2008, which ended in June 2008, the Library's total operating budget, including appropriated and non-appropriated funding sources, was \$318,435, of which \$61,512, or 19.78%, was expended on materials (books, DVDs, etc.). The Town's appropriation covered about 58% of the required material expense with the balance coming from the Library's non-appropriated sources (trust fund income, gifts, etc.). The Library anticipates a similarly sized media budget for FY2009.

While meeting all service standards established by Commonwealth statutes and regulations, the Library would not be able to exist as it did throughout calendar 2008 without having non-appropriated sources of income available to augment municipal appropriations. Over the calendar year 2008, the Library spent \$59,149 in non-appropriated funds. The funds were provided by the following sources:

The Library spent \$14,099 of its *State Aid* and other state income over the calendar year 2008 [note that some of this revenue was rolled over from prior years]. Notable State Aid expenses included supplementing building maintenance and custodial services (\$6,534), purchases of paper, printer ink and other office supplies (\$2,165), wages and other professional services (\$2,013), programs and other direct to patron services (\$1,848), books and media processing supplies (\$799) and books and other media (\$740).

The Library expended a total of \$8,962 of *Trust Fund* income to pay the wages of our Special Collection Assistant (\$2,622), and purchase books and other media (\$6,340).

The Library manages four *revolving accounts* used to collect revenue and to make targeted purchases. Over the calendar year 2008, the Library expended \$7,413 from its *revolving accounts* to purchase books and other media (\$6,533) and maintain and supply its public copy machine (\$880).

The Library maintains several *gift accounts* established to accept donations from individuals, estates, and organizations. Over the course of the year, the Library received \$11,142 in gifts from the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library (\$5,217), the Rosemary Davis Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation (\$3,953), Alan C. Nichols (\$1,500), Lancaster Land Trust (\$340), Emily Chetkowski (\$20), Mary Jane Wanamaker & Samantha Riley Sarfin (\$20) and Kathleen M. Holden (\$10). The Library received \$82 in anonymous gifts. Gift accounts provide funds for most Adult and Youth programming as well as purchasing all of the Library's museum passes.

The calendar year 2008 was also noteworthy in donations made to the newly formed John Eliot Thayer Trust (J.E.T). Income generated from J.E.T. principal will be spent in future years to support all services associated with the Library's Rare and Special Collections. The following people gave generously to this Trust fund: Cornelia Adams, I. Tucker Burr, Pauline T. Duke, John T. Goodhue, John Hemenway, Phoebe Milliken, and Keiko F. Thayer.

Finally, by the end of FY2008 (June 30), the Library again qualified and received money through the *Central Massachusetts Regional System's (CMRLS) Net Lender* program. This program reimbursed the Library for lending more materials to patrons of other communities than Lancaster residents borrowed from other public libraries. The Library was reimbursed for *net loans* generating a \$7,408 award, an increase over 79% compared to last year's award. Further, The Thayer Memorial Library was rated the third most active net lender trailing only Worcester Public Library and Fitchburg Public Library.

Building and Operations

The calendar year 2008 was marked by several notable building and operational expenses. Early in the year, a patron reported that she couldn't hear the exhaust fan operating while in the ground floor bathroom. Upon further investigation, the inoperable fan, housed near the Library's roof, was replaced. In April, the Library addressed the problem of the Museum humidifier draining from the roof near the front entrance steps. A contractor was hired to reroute the water, which now flows near the reference room.

In July, the Lancaster Fire Department responded to an alarm triggered by an attic heat sensor. Areas in the attic reached in excess of 125°F. As a result of placing fans to void the heat, one slipped, fell, and shattered one of the stained glass panels above Memorial Hall. A glass conservator was hired to restore the panel, which was completed in October. In July, the Library installed a permanent mailbox in front of the Children's room on Thayer Drive.

In October, motion sensor lights were installed in all public bathrooms. In addition, the Director's Office was furnished with a stately new desk marking the final purchase made by the Library Building Fund.

Finally, in December, an ice storm devastated Lancaster and most surrounding towns. Behind the Children's Room, several of the more substantial tree limbs from the white pines fell under the enormous weight of accumulated ice. In addition to losing power, the Library's main fire panel was obliterated, the likely victim of an electrical surge experienced during the storm. In total, the Library was closed for two days (Friday and Saturday) before opening again on Monday.

Collection, Circulation and Other Activities

Special Collections services continued to be impacted by declining Trust Fund income as a result of falling interest rates. With less income being generated by the Library Trust Funds, the principal source providing funding for staff hours in the Constance V. R. Thayer Dexter Special Collections became even more limited. However, without any municipal funding, the Library accomplished important work regarding its Special Collections and Artifacts. In July, Lancaster's Historical Commission had the Coach Lace Swatches on display in the Museum remounted. Through an LSTA grant administered by the CMRLS, the Library digitized a collection of photographs of the 1912 Fourth of July Pageant Exhibition conducted on the Town Green. The images are located on the Digital Treasures site in the Lancaster Collection at <http://dlib.cwmars.org/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=%2Flancaster>. In September, after over

twenty years, the Library was able to afford to update the appraisals of its most precious treasures in the Rare Book Collection. For Veteran’s Day, the Library unveiled its newly restored World War I roll call memorial.

By the end of December 2008, the Library’s collection count rose from 61,784 items in 2007 to 64,205. Many of these items were purchased; however, the Library received 2,836 donated items, almost a 50% increase from last year. Assuming the most conservative value for these items, the Library estimates these additions were worth over \$28,138. A generous portion of these donated materials was most likely acquired through the Library’s successful CDs for fines program. In total, the Library processed and added 8,624 items to the collection, which was 1,327 more items than in 2007. The Library subscribed to 152 periodicals and received an additional 29 subscriptions as gifts. In addition, thanks in large part to funding provided from the George K. Progin Foundation and the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, the Library was able to subscribe to 19 various museum and attraction passes by year’s end with a total value of over \$4,500.

At the end of December 2008, the Library recorded 5,052 registered borrowers, 221 more than in 2007. Over 70% of Lancaster residents had Library cards by the end of the year. Circulation usage continued to reach new heights, increasing over 22% since last year. Remarkably, in the previous seven years, the Library more than doubled its circulation transactions.

Table 2
Circulation

			$\Delta\%$ from	$\Delta\%$
7-year	Calendar	Calendar	Calendar	from 7-
Average	2007	2008	2007	Year
				Average
73,479	98,131	120,165	22.45%	63.54%

Analysis of annual circulation statistics continues to reveal that patron demand for competing media types, namely in audio and video formats, is still growing. Over calendar 2008, non-print (compact discs, videocassettes, etc.) circulation accounted for almost 50% of total circulation activity. What continues to remain encouraging is that usage of print media remained robust over this same time period and rose over 18% from 51,992 to 61,401.

The Library once more provided non-school related programming activities for all ages throughout the calendar year 2008. In total, the Library provided 114 (28 Adult and 86 Youth) programs with the overall turnout to all programs totaling over 3,500 people.

In addition to providing weekly story hours, the Children’s Department continued its monthly Young Adult book discussion group, provided its fifth annual Big Truck and Classic Car Night on the Town Green, four Red Cross Babysitters’ Training courses, and four Princess Tea Parties. A new series was begun for older youth based on the card game *Magic the Gathering*, which met nine times. An additional 11 programs of varying themes were funded by the George K. Progin Foundation.

Likewise, the Adult Department provided 10 programs funded by the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, 13 programs in its series titled "Learn from Your Neighbors," 12 Adult book discussions, and 4 programs in its newest offering, Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library Program Series.

The Library continued to diversify services by displaying the work of local artists through the Art on Rotation Gallery out of Clinton. The Library was also the recipient of a "Picturing America" grant, an initiative from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Images of 40 iconic works of American art of varying media were showcased on the second floor of the Library's rotunda. Finally, the 7th annual "Food for Fines" program was held to assist families in Lancaster who had fallen on tough times in 2008. Late fees were waived for all patrons who donated non-perishable food to the cause. The program commenced around Thanksgiving and ran until December 23. All food donations were collected by Jean Syria and Denise Hurley in conjunction with the Lancaster Police Department, which then distributed the food to Lancaster residents.

Over the course of calendar 2008, the Library estimates five patrons per day utilized the public computers for Internet access and word processing. In addition, the Library initiated wireless internet access throughout the building for patrons who brought their wireless devices (i.e., laptop, telephone).

The Library continued to reach out to Lancaster residents using targeted publicity and published its newsletter the "Clarion: The Quarterly Newsletter of the Thayer Memorial Library" for the fifth straight year. Both major local newspapers, The Item, and Lancaster Times & Clinton Courier continued to provide the Library ample space to publicize current programming events on a weekly basis.

Even when not open for everyday services or Library-sponsored events, the Library building was frequently utilized by local, regional, or state governmental or private agencies for non-library specific meetings or events. In the calendar year 2008, the Library provided around-the-clock access to its meeting rooms (located on the building's ground floor) and recorded 301 uses, 109 more uses than the year prior.

Donations, Volunteers and Other Unpaid Help

During the calendar year 2008, the Board of Trustees launched the Thayer Memorial Library Foundation in partnership with the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library. The purpose of the Foundation is to benefit the Library by conducting and managing an Annual Appeal and other major fundraising. The 501-c-3 status of the Foundation was secured, and officers were chosen. The Thayer Memorial Library Foundation sent its inaugural appeal to Lancaster citizens and businesses in November 2008.

Money and gifts-in-kind were received from many benefactors, and the Library wishes to recognize the following people:

Cornelia Adams , A. Dennis Barbor of George K. Progin Foundation, Bob Baylis and the Big Truck Night Crew, William Bonczek, I. Tucker Burr, Emily Chetkowski, Sheryll Collins, Central Massachusetts Regional Library System, Christopher Detsikas, Pauline T. Duke, David Dunn, Dunn and Company, Charlotte Follansbee, Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, Christiann Gibeau, John T. Goodhue, The Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Kathleen M. Holden, Lancaster Cultural Council, Lancaster Fire Department, Lancaster Times & Courier, Library Building Fund Board, Jean Lidstone of the Lancaster Land Trust, Carlos LLanso, Chester Locke, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Ron Millet, Brian Newton of Legacy Publishing, Phoebe Milliken, Alan C. Nichols, Marilyn Pagé, Valorie Parent, Jane Paszko, PJW Youth Fund, Plastran Inc.-PTX, Susan Polansky, Sue Raymond, Sarah Reiff-Hekking, Samantha Riley Sarfin, John Schumacher-Hardy, Lauren E. Searcy, John Spencer, Sara Spencer, Dana Stanley, Kathy Suits, Mary Jane Wanamaker, Keiko F. Thayer, Shawn Winsor, and the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System.

The Library's loyal corps of volunteers continued to play an invaluable role in enhancing the ability of the staff to deliver quality service to patrons. In addition to adding new members to its volunteer ranks, the Library was the recipient of 3,014 unpaid, volunteer hours of service – an increase of over 20% from 2,482 hours the previous year. Averaging over 47.5 hours per week, volunteers saved Lancaster residents \$26,951 in wages (based on the wages of an entry-level page). Additionally, Roseanne Colombo and Donald Boucher completed their second year working at the Library as Tax Abatement staff. Cecile Thurlow completed her fifth year as the Library's Tax Abatement Senior Museum Clerk.

The Library's loyal corps of volunteers includes Janet Baylis, Tamara Bedard, Laurie Bernadette, Elaine Bitter, Donald Boucher, Lisa Boutotte, Yartiza Brown, Tim Castner, Britlin Chapman, Pete Christoph, Sheryll Collins, Kyle Conroy, Pete Cormier, Lisa D'Ambrosio, Helen Dorval, Cornelius Driscoll, Kathy Driscoll, Precious Erving, Marie Espinola, Maria Fenstermaker, Beverly Fine, Hope Fiori, Brian Flaherty, Molly Flynn-Alling, David Gendler, Maura Gerrans, Christiann Gibeau, Anvish Gurijala, Emily Hall, Nicole Hart, Alan Joseph, Bob Kadlec, Susan Kadlec, Carolyn Ketchum, Ceil Kirby, Laura Pelletier, Kristin Law, Barbara Linton, Margaret MacLaughlin, Adrienne Martin, Bobby Masterson, Dot McCandless, Norma McCarty, Roy McCoy, The boys at the New River Academy, Jamie Osborne, Marilyn Pagé, Kristen Phillips, Susan Polansky, Gail Prewandowski, Kas Quinn, Teresa Quinn, Irene Roper, Jo-Agnes Santangelo, Cassie Sefton, Ellyn Sherman, Hollis Shore, Emma Sneidman, Selena Trott, Kyle Ursuliak, Rhys Ursuliak, Robyn Yalian, Stephanie Yalian, Tyler Yalian, and the Library Trustees.

Respectfully submitted

Joseph J. Mulé, Director

* Administered through the Council on Aging Tax Abatement Program