

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
OF THE THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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

DIRECTOR: Joseph J. Mulé
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/ADULT SERVICES LIBRARIAN
(JANUARY – FEBRUARY): Anne White
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/ADULT SERVICES LIBRARIAN
(AUGUST – DECEMBER): Nancy Hayes Clune
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 Colombo*
COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT: Carolyn Stump*
COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT: Chester Westover*

HOURS:

01 January 2009 – 30 June 2009

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

30 June 2009 – 31 December 2009

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 (closed July – September)

In the 148th year of service to the residents of Lancaster, the Thayer Memorial Library witnessed another year of growth in services and cuts in municipal funding, challenging the Library's certification status with the Commonwealth.

Budget

Only a year after mentioning – in last year's report – how relatively stable the budgetary environment was, the calendar year 2009's financial outlook was anything but secure. The Library operated with two appropriations that subsequently were less than each year's prior municipal provision. From January to June, the Library worked on the final 6 months of FY2009's municipal appropriation. Likewise, from July to December, the Library operated on the first six months of FY2010's municipal appropriation. Table 1 illustrates the Library's total operating municipal appropriations for each *fiscal* year, affecting the *calendar* year 2009.

By the end of FY2009, the Library's budget was cut \$10,000 to help Lancaster meet its financial obligations. In one sense, the Library was able to capitalize on the departure of staff and funded more than 67% of its cut from unused wages. The balance of the money was taken from the Library's media budget. The Town went into the FY2010 budget process requesting that departments formulate a level services budget from which further cuts were made. Although the Library was eventually able to maintain open hours[†] and staffing levels, the Library was asked to cut more than \$21,000 from its operating budget, reducing by 53% funds for buying books, magazines, DVDs, and other media.

Fiscal Year	Months Utilized in Calendar 2009	Total Fiscal Year Municipal Appropriation	Δ% from Previous Fiscal Year
FY2009	Jan. to June	\$246,635	-6.66%
FY2010	July to Dec.	\$237,674	-5.67%

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 FY2009 and expects to do so in FY2010 as well. As a result of meeting all of the Commonwealth's requirements for public library service, the Library incrementally received an FY2009 State Award totaling \$13,110, more than a 17% increase in State funds from FY2008's earnings.

Highlights for meeting the MBLC's requirement over the course of calendar 2009 include:

- Maintaining the Library's Minimum Appropriation Requirement (MAR) provided by the Town for both fiscal years.
- Sustaining 49 hours of public service per week.
- Meeting the Materials Expenditure Requirement (MER) by purchasing at least 16%[‡] of the municipal appropriation on books and other informational materials. In FY2009, the Library managed an MER of \$57,106, of which Lancaster provided 83%. If the MER in

FY2010 is \$40,000 (the current estimate), then instead of funding 83% of it, Lancaster will fund 48%. This trend is unsustainable.

While the Library met all service standards established by Commonwealth statutes and regulations, it would not be able to exist as it did throughout the calendar 2009 without having augmented municipal appropriations by drawing on non-appropriated sources of income. Over the calendar year 2009, the Library spent more than \$59,129 in non-appropriated or fee-generated funds. The funds were provided by the following sources:

The Library spent \$12,844 of its *State Aid* income over the calendar year 2009 [note that some of this revenue was rolled over from prior years]. Notable State Aid expenses included supplementing building maintenance and custodial services (\$5,204), purchasing computers and other electronic devices as well as related supplies (\$3,241), wages, and other professional services (\$2,584), and office and collection-based supplies (1,816).

The Library spent \$6,383 of *Trust Fund* income to pay the wages of our Special Collections Assistant (\$1,846) and purchase books and other media (\$4,537) for the general collection.

The Library manages a number of *revolving accounts* used to collect revenue and to make targeted purchases. Over the calendar year 2008, the Library spent \$12,215 from its *revolving accounts* to purchase books and other media (\$11,409) and maintain and supply its public copy machine (\$806).

The Library maintains several *gift accounts* established to accept donations from individuals, estates, and organizations. Over the course of the year, the Library received \$10,271 in gifts from the following organizations: the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library (\$7,620), Alan C. Nichols (\$1,500), Metropolitan Antiques (\$351), Albert Dodge (\$300), Lancaster Land Trust (\$100), Linda J. Kostin (\$100), Mom's Club of Lancaster / Sterling (\$88), Richard A. Bartlett (\$75), Muriel J. McLaughlin (\$50), America's Charities (\$38), Norma Gilbertson (\$25) and Alice J. Woodburn (\$15). The Library received \$10 in anonymous gifts. Gift accounts provide funds for most Adult and Youth programming as well as funds for purchasing all of the Library's museum passes.

The calendar year 2009 was also noteworthy in donations made to the 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 Book Collections. The following people gave generously to this Trust fund: Pauline Duke, Mary T. Duke, and John W. Duke

Finally, by the end of FY2008 (June 30), the Library again qualified and received money through the *Central Massachusetts Regional Library System's (CMRLS) Net Lender* program. This program reimbursed the Library for lending more materials to patrons in other communities than Lancaster residents borrowed from other public libraries. The Library was reimbursed for *net loans*, generating an \$11,676 award, an increase of more than 57% compared to last year's award. Further, The Thayer Memorial Library was rated the region's third most active net lender, trailing only Worcester Public Library and Fitchburg Public Library. More than \$7,400 of this

money was spent on building maintenance, office supplies, collection and custodial supplies, and other essential services.

Staff

After almost eight years, the Library bid farewell to Library Assistant Director / Adult Services Librarian Anne White, who accepted a position at the Worcester Public Library. Anne accomplished so much over her tenure to the benefit of Lancaster patrons. After she was hired in April of 2001, less than three months after the Library hired its new Director, she quickly assumed her duties and ably assisted in rolling out the Library's new service plan and establishing the Library's vision for the next five years. Most notably, she transformed adult services by greatly expanding the amount of Adult Programming the Library offered. In addition to creating the *Learn from Your Neighbors* program series, she established the Library's first Adult Summer Reading Program and successfully secured grant monies every year to further enhance adult programs. In addition to supervising volunteers and managing the circulation desk, Anne had assumed adult book ordering duties and did a masterful job. Anne is greatly missed and left a void that immediately affected services upon her departure.

The Library is pleased to add to staff its new Library Assistant Director / Adult Services Librarian, Nancy Hayes Clune. Nancy brought with her a wide range of experiences working for the Lawrence Library in Pepperell as its Assistant Director and as Branch Division Head for the Worcester Public Library. With Nancy on board, this may be the only time in the TML's history that two staff members hold Master of Library Science degrees. In less than a year, Nancy has already left her mark by expanding Adult programming even more and by receiving a \$2,825 grant for a new round of Rosemary Davis programs. The Library looks forward to implementing Nancy's skills and talents as we continue to re-interpret the information and recreation needs of Lancaster patrons.

Building and Operations

The calendar year 2009 was marked by several notable building and operational expenses, either repairing or improving the Library. Early in the year, the Library Building Fund made its final purchase, buying a desk and accompanying chair for the Library Director's office. Using gift money received in 2008 from the Current Topics Club, the Library converted shelving space on the main floor into a beautifully constructed display case. The Library repaired and re-pointed the granite stairwell structure in the front of the building; a more significant re-pointing job is needed in the rear of the Library. Lancaster resident Paul Leone donated time and materials to restore two wooden emergency doors located in the front and back of the building. Through a grant awarded to the Town, the Library re-commissioned its HVAC system. Other operational events included a pump failure on the Library's older boiler, two telephone failures that left the Library without its second line and fax service, and the failure of the Library's outside light sensor, leaving the Library's grounds dark for several nights.

Collection, Circulation and Other Activities

Special Collections services continued to be affected by declining Trust Fund income as a result of falling interest rates. With less income being generated by Library Trust Funds, the principal source providing funding for staff hours in the Constance V. R. Thayer Dexter Special Collections became even more limited.

The Library's collection count continued to expand in 2009, with the collection growing from 64,205 to almost 68,000 items. Many of these items were purchased; however, the Library received nearly 4,000 donated items, more than a 40% increase from last year. Assuming the most conservative value for these items, the Library estimates that these additions were worth more than \$20,000. A generous portion of these donated materials was most likely acquired through the Library's successful "CDs for fines." In total, the Library processed and added 8,483 items to its collection. The Library subscribed to 136 periodicals and received an additional 23 subscriptions as gifts. In addition – thanks in large part go to the George K. Progin Foundation and the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library – the Library was able to subscribe to 18 museum and attraction passes by year's end, with a total value of more than \$3,180.

At the end of December 2009, the Library recorded 4,866 registered borrowers. Nearly 70% of Lancaster residents had Library cards by the end of the year, ahead of the national average⁵. As chart 1 illustrates, circulation usage continued to reach new heights in 2009, increasing close to 19% since last year. Table 2 shows that the Library more than doubled its circulation transactions over a five-year span starting in 2004.

Chart 1

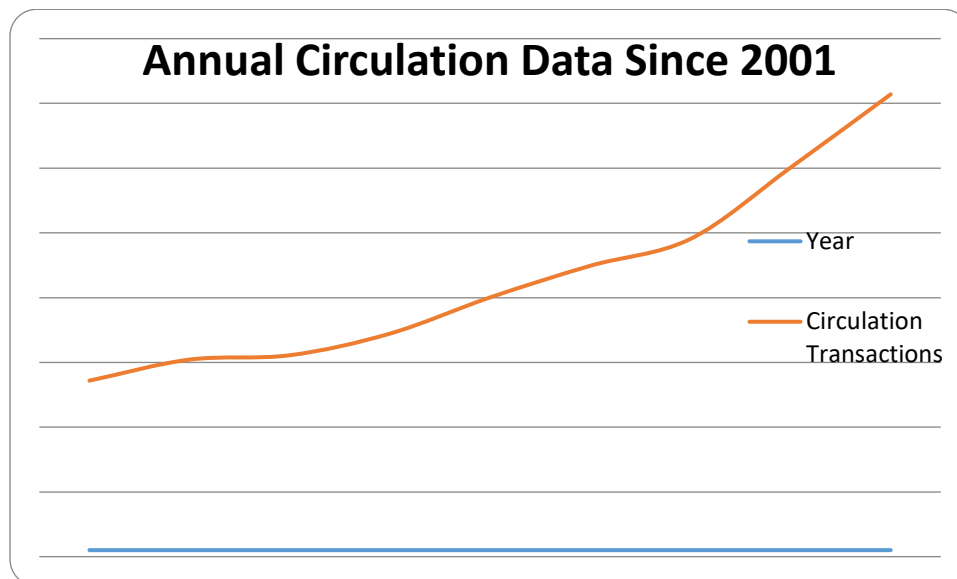


Table 2			
Circulation			
Calendar 2004	Calendar 2008	Calendar 2009	Δ% from Calendar 2008
68,887	120,165	142,798	18.83%

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, DVDs, videocassettes, etc.) circulation accounted for more than 50% of total circulation activity. What continues to remain encouraging is that the use of print media remained robust over this same time period and rose more than 12%, from 61,401 to 68,856.

The Library once more provided non-school-related programming activities for all ages throughout the calendar year 2009. In total, the Library provided 154 (67 Adult and 87 Youth) programs with the overall turnout to all programs totaling nearly 4,000 people.

In addition to providing weekly story hours, the Children’s Department continued its monthly Young Adult book discussion group, produced its sixth annual Big Truck and Classic Car Night on the Town Green, held four Red Cross Babysitters’ Training courses, four CPR classes and three Yoga programs. Funds from the George K. Progin Foundation and the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library provided additional programs on various topics.

Likewise, the Adult Department provided 12 monthly book discussions, eight programs in the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation series, and four programs in the homegrown series titled “Learn from Your Neighbors.” In addition, the Library used funds given by the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library to produce 15 Friends’ “Healthy Living” programs as well as 10 new programs in the “Art and History” series. Finally, in response to the growing number of unemployed people during an uncertain economy, the Library created a networking group that met seven times and offered several seminars on job hunting strategies and personal finance skills.

The Library continued to diversify services by displaying the work of local artists through the Art on Rotation Gallery in Clinton and offered the 8th annual “Food for Fines” program. Late fees were waived for all patrons who donated non-perishable food to the cause. This program commenced around Thanksgiving and ran through the week of Christmas. 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 2009, the Library provided public computers for Internet access and word processing to an average of 67 patrons per week. In addition, the Library maintains wireless internet access throughout the building for patrons who bring their wireless devices.

The Library continued to reach out to Lancaster residents using targeted publicity and published *The Clarion: The Quarterly Newsletter of the Thayer Memorial Library* for the sixth straight year.

Both major local newspapers, *The Item* and the *Lancaster Times & Clinton Courier* continued to provide the Library space to publicize current programming events on a weekly basis.

Even when not open for Library services or Library-sponsored events, the Library building was frequently used 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 204 uses.

Donations, Volunteers and Other Unpaid Help

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

Cornelia Adams, America's Charities, Katie Barrett, Sam Barrett, A. Dennis Barbo of the George K. Progin Foundation, Bob Baylis and the Big Truck Night Crew, Tamara Bedard, Central Massachusetts Regional Library System, Pete Christoph, Sheryll Collins of Art on Rotation Gallery, Paul S. D'Angona, Christopher Detsikas, Erin DeCoste, Albert Dodge, Kathy Dugan, John W. Duke, Mary T. Duke, Pauline T. Duke, David Dunn, Dunn and Company, Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, Norma Gilbertson, Denise Hurley, Len Kelley, Linda J. Kostin, Lancaster Cultural Council, Lancaster Fire Department, Lancaster Land Trust, Lancaster Police Department, Library Building Fund Board, Library Foundation, Paul Leone, Carlos LLanso, Chester Locke, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Laura Matthew, Muriel J. McLaughlin, Metropolitan Antiques, Mom's Club of Lancaster / Sterling, Brian Newton of Legacy, Nashoba Montessori School, Alan C. Nichols, Stephanie Notaro, Sandy Nowicki, Hank Paszko, Jean-Paul Pagé, Marilyn Pagé, Laura Pelletier, Rebecca Shoer, Karen Silverthorn of the G. Eric Jones Library at Atlantic Union College, Jean Syria, Keely Walsh, Wanda Walsh, Julie Williams, Shawn Winsor, the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System, Faith Venier, Robyn Yalian, Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Stephanie Yalian and Tyler Yalian

The Library's loyal corps of volunteers continued to play an invaluable role, enhancing the ability of the staff to deliver high-quality service to patrons. In addition to adding new members to its volunteer ranks, the Library was the recipient of 2,818 unpaid volunteer hours of service. Averaging over 54 hours per week, volunteers saved Lancaster residents \$25,189 in wages (based on the wages of an entry-level page)**. Additionally, Roseanne Colombo and Donald Boucher completed their third year working at the Library as Tax Abatement staff. Cecile Thurlow completed her sixth year as the Library's Tax Abatement Senior Museum Clerk. Chester Westover and Carolyn Stump began working as Tax Abatement Collection Assistants starting in November.

The Library's loyal corps of volunteers includes Laurie Bernadette, Donald Boucher, Lisa Boutotte, Emily Castner, Kyle Conroy, Kirsten Dean, Marie Espinola, Maria Fenstermaker, Beverly Fine, David Gendler, Christiann Gibeau, Anvish Gurijala, Joan Higbee-Glace, Alan Joseph, Bob Kadlec, Susan Kadlec, Len Kelley, Carolyn Ketchum, Ceil Kirby, Jennifer Leone, Barbara Linton, Margaret MacLaughlin, Brittany Madden, Bobby Masterson, Norma McCarty, Mark McLeod, Roy McCoy, Susan Munyon, Dorothy Olson, Marilyn Pagé, Kristen Phillips, Susan Polansky, Gail

Prewandowski, Kas Quinn, Teresa Quinn, Irene Roper, Mike Roper, Jo-Agnes Santangelo, Ellyn Sherman, Hollis Shore, Cecilia Thurlow, the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library and the Library Trustees.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph J. Mulé, Director

* Administered through the Council on Aging Tax Abatement Program.

† The Library was actually closed on Saturdays starting in July through September, anticipating yet another round of budget cuts that, fortunately, never materialized. The Library restored Saturday hours in October.

‡ In June, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners changed its regulation for calculating the Materials Expenditure Requirement (MER). As of 26 June 2009, the MER calculation is based on the beginning of the year municipal appropriation. See: "Changes to State Aid Regulations in Effect as of June 26, 2009" at http://mblc.state.ma.us/grants/state_aid/blog/tag/materials-expenditure-requirement/.

§ American Library Association; Florida State University, Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2006-2007.

** Last year's Annual Report stated that the Library accumulated an average of 47.5 hours per week in unpaid assistance, which is incorrect. The Library averaged 47.5 hours in 2007. In 2008 the Library averaged 58 hours a week.