

**FORBES LIBRARY**  
**2008 Annual Report 2008**  
**Year Ending December 31, 2008**

2008 was another busy year for Forbes. Although statistics reflected a slight decrease in usage, those numbers were explained by several factors. Lilly Library stayed open on Sundays while Forbes was closed so some patrons shifted their usage patterns. Also Lilly became a member of the CWMARS consortium so were finally a full service circulating library which meant patrons did not have to use Forbes to make interlibrary loans. Thirdly, the extremely popular outside 24/7 book drops at Forbes have allowed many people to return books without actually entering the library building. Despite these downturns, Forbes circulation per hour increased slightly, showing that reduced hours did not have a direct correlation to reduced usage, but more shifting usage patterns.

**Budget**

- Operating Budget -- \$1,146,582
- Book Budget -- \$149,100 -- To meet patron demand, video and audio book line items in both adult and children's were increased by 10%. That increase was funded by a 2.5% decrease in all other circulating areas.
- City Appropriation -- \$1,085,926
- State Aid -- \$25,645
- The library received \$4,930.34 in matching funds from the MBLC for fundraising activities. \$327 of it was given to the Friends of Forbes as their percentage share.

**Funds**

The library's investments were moved from BankNorth to Bartholomew & Company in part because they have a great deal of experience with municipalities and community funds. The company was recommended by City Treasurer George Zimmerman and the associated fees will be lower because they would be based on the City of Northampton's total investments, not just the Forbes Library endowment.

**Grants**

Highland Valley Elder Services has awarded Outreach librarian, Adam Novitt, a grant to enable Forbes to buy three more Kindles at \$359 each. These Kindles are dedicated for Outreach patrons. With a Kindle, a nursing home resident can download and read as many books as they wish with 180,000 titles to choose from including nearly the entire NYT best seller list. The device is very simple to use and part of the grant money will be used to train the Kindle recipients on how to download books and make use of the Kindle's many features. The remaining money will be used to purchase titles which can be shared on all three Kindles. This is an exciting new library service that has probably not yet been done anywhere else.

Forbes Library was awarded two Equal Access grants from the MBLC which totaled \$11,000. Information Services librarians Rick Hart and Jennifer Ditkoff wrote and administered

these grants to develop smoother access for patrons attempting to make use of the library's health resources.

## **Operations**

The Community Preservation Committee awarded Forbes Library \$1,000,000 to fund repairs to the library's building envelope.

A welcome kiosk was installed in the lobby in May. It included a 32-inch monitor with rotating display of about 20 minutes of content developed by Lisa Downing, Ben Kalish, and Jason Petcen, including historic photographs, library programs, and a tutorial on how to place a hold online. The kiosk was funded by the Friends of Forbes Library and an LSTA customer service grant.

A Spanish language version of the library's website was launched in October.

The customer service team hired a design firm, Extra Mile Design, to create a new logo for the library and develop a template for library brochures.

All the library's adult graphic novels have been gathered together for ease of browsing. The new shelves are next to the Hosmer Gallery in the passageway to Arts & Music with a new chair purchased by The Friends of Forbes for comfortable reading.

Forbes hosted its third wedding Sunday, September 7th, when Adam Novitt and Priscilla Miner held their reception in the main floor reading room. The library's main floor was transformed into an elegant setting for dinner for 100 guests in the reading room, a 17 piece orchestra on the mezzanine, and dancing in the lobby.

In August, a new microfilm reader printer was purchased for \$9,000 using capital from the Stahl Halberstadt Technology Fund. For the first time the library is now offering a color copier to the patrons with newly leased copiers from OCE.

Two of the library's original pin oaks were removed because they posed a danger to pedestrians and cars. They had died, probably as a result of road and driveway work above their root systems and their dead branches were beginning to drop. No trees were planted to replace them as they were on either side of the entrance and therefore did not make a visible break in the line of existing trees.

The Facilities Oversight Committee consisting of Peter Rowe, Janet Moulding, Lisa Downing, Jason Petcen, and Jason Myers reported that projects this summer included cleaning the carpets and building bookcases in the Children's room. The Children's Room needs major work, including new carpeting; however it has been decided to wait until after the west wall restoration is completed. Outside, the windows were washed in August and new lines were painted in the parking lot. Additional plantings were postponed until the wall restoration work is completed. The HVAC was repaired, but may require more work if a pump needs to be replaced. All of the library's fire alarms were tested, and there are new exit signs on the first floor.

The library began to circulate two Kindles, user-friendly e-books. No other library in the area circulates them and they are extremely popular. Thanks to Joe Blumenthal of Downtown Sounds, Forbes became the only library in CWMars to circulate a ukulele. Like the Kindles, the ukulele proved so popular that a second one was purchased. The ukuleles circulate with an instructional DVD.

Once again, Forbes offered a concert on the lawn Saturday, October 4th. Entertainment was provided by the Novels, featuring as lead singer Forbes Library's own Jason Mazzotta and the School for the Dead with Bookmobile driver Brian Marchese on drums.

A Forbes Library team consisting of Julie Bartlett, Brian Tabor, Rick Hart, and Chris Kennedy were the winners of the local history scavenger hunt on October 11th held to benefit Dollars for Scholars.

The library's Chrysler Outreach car was taken off the road because it needed expensive repairs. A new car, a black Saturn SL1, was donated to the library by Justine Higgins of Northampton.

Denny Nolan, a local Red Sox fan and season subscriber, donated actual seats from Fenway Park to the Children's Room. When the Red Sox renovated Fenway Park, it offered season ticket holders the opportunity to buy their old seats. Mr. Nolan of Northampton, with fond memories of being read to in the Children's Room at Forbes Library, thought children would enjoy sitting in real ballpark seats at the library and offered them to Forbes.

Forbes hosted a First Night performance, Culture & Dance of Argentina which included a Tango demonstration and dance lesson, as part of First Night, the City's New Year's Eve celebration.

The library held a Food for Fines program in January and collected 874 pounds of food which was donated to the Northampton Survival Center.

Forbes Library is now on MySpace. Young Adult librarian Stephanie Levine set up the page to attract teens with whom MySpace is so popular.

## **Trustees**

Attorney Jesse Adams joined the board in January, replacing David Bloomberg, who resigned at the end of his first term. Anne Keppler and David Bloomberg were awarded the Trustees Award in May. For the first time, the Trustees instituted an annual fund drive targeting the area of technology needs in the library. The drive raised over \$7,000.

The Trustees decided not to raise the number of board members from five to seven.

## **Donations**

- \$200 from Frank Roach, Williamsburg, to deposit in the Book Fund
- \$50 from Marjorie Mizula, Florence, in memory of Marie D. Slattery, to purchase materials on knitting or crocheting, to deposit in the Book Fund
- \$100 gift certificate to local book stores from Mark and Michele Aldrich, Hatfield
- \$50 from Micala Sidore, Northampton, to the Book Fund
- \$50 from Hedwig Rose, Northampton, to the Garvey Book Fund
- \$100 from Margaret McClamroch, Granby, to the Garvey Book Fund
- \$250 from anonymous to the Garvey Book Fund
- \$1,000 from Edmund DeLaCour, Northampton, to the Garvey Book Fund
- \$50 from Jonathan Hogan, Ware, to the Garvey Book Fund
- \$90 from the World War II Veterans Association, Northampton, to the 2008 Annual Fund
- \$50 from Jeanne West, Hadley, to the 2008 Annual Fund
- \$26,005.20 bequest from Thelma J. Isaacs, "to be added to your Endowment Fund and used for such

fund's charitable uses and purposes" deposited in the Garvey Book Fund.

- \$1,000 from Anonymous for Special Collections to be deposited in the Special Collections Fund
- \$190 from Louisa Ferree, Northampton, to pay for a subscription to Value Line
- Subscription to the Christian Science Monitor from Margaret McClamroch, Granby
- \$2,000 from the Friends of Forbes for Adult Programming
- \$52,949.50 as the final payout of the estate of Dorothy Stahl. The Trustees are asked to deposit the bulk of this money into the Stahl Halberstadt Technology Fund.
- \$100 from the Chestnut Farm, Hardwick, to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$25 from Reina Schratte & Rufus Zogbaum, Leeds, to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$50 from the Micale Sidore, Northampton, to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$25 from the Monday Afternoon Club, Northampton, in appreciation for "safekeeping its [The Monday Morning Club's] records and historical pieces in the archives", to the Special Collections Fund.
- \$250 from David Bloomberg, Northampton, "in memory of Bob Dunn and in honor of Russ Carrier" to deposit in the Stahl/Halberstadt Technology Fund.
- \$50 from Marcia Burick, Leeds, to pay for plaques for commemorative trees, to the Second Century Fund.
- \$1,000 from anonymous, to be divided between the Children's Room and the Hampshire Room, to be deposited equally in the Children's Book Fund and the Special Collections Fund.
- \$555.42 from Dave's Soda & Pet City, Agawam, for participation in the Friends of Dave's Program, to be deposited in the Annual Fund.
- \$1,000 from Judith Gronim, Northampton, in memory of her father William Gronim, to purchase DVD's and audio books, to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$2,000 from the Friends of Forbes for the Staff Development Fund.
- The Quabbin Chapter of the Association of Traditional Hooking Artists have renewed the library's subscription to *Rug Hooking* magazine for another year.
- Nathanael Schilbach donated a subscription of *Natural Life* to the Parenting Collection.
- \$500 from Todd Thompson, Northampton, for the Children's book collection to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$1,000 from Anonymous to be divided between the Hampshire Room and the Children's Department, \$500 to be deposited in the Special Collections Fund and \$500 in the Aid Book Fund.
- \$30 from The Monday Afternoon Club, Northampton, in memory of their late member, Doris Davis, to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$500 from Barry Schechter & Kathy Hibshman, Tucson, AZ, to be deposited to the Aid Book Fund.
- \$10 from H. W. Hopp, Northampton, to the Book Fund.
- \$1,000 from Glee & Bob Miner, Wallingford, CT, in celebration of the marriage of Adam & Priscilla Novitt, to the Stahl Halberstadt Technology Fund.
- \$5,000 from the Friends of Forbes to the Aid Book Fund.

- \$500 from the Harris & Eliza Kempner Fund as a matching gift for the contribution last month by Todd K. Thompson, to the Children's Department to be deposited in the Aid Book Fund.
- \$100 from Donald Reutener, Florence, to the endowment fund, to be deposited in the Aid Fund.
- \$1,500 from Hampshire Property Management for lease of land at the Old School Commons, to the Garvey Book Fund.
- \$1,631.25 from NEBA for sales of books to the Special Collections Fund
- \$1,835.00 from NEBA for sales of books to the Special Collections Fund

### **Code Green Winners**

Each month a staff member's name is drawn at random from those names submitted by patrons or other employees for acts of excellent customer service and fellow staff support. In 2008, the most nominated employees were Jason Petcen, Jason Myers, Faith Kaufmann, Jennie Pittsinger, Katie Krol, Stephanie Levine, Brian Tabor, Julie Bartlett, Paula Elliott, and Jude McGowan.

### **Special Collections**

The Trustees purchased three prints by Marty Klein of Easthampton: *Tulips and Callas*, *June Roadside Foliage*, and *Some Fun Guys*. They also purchased the print *Mirrored Lysianthus* by Betsy Feick.

The Calvin Coolidge 75th Anniversary Memorial Event was held on January 5th in the Coolidge Museum. Over 100 people attended the event which premiered Historic Northampton's excellent new film on the Coolidge era and unveiled the newly cleaned White House portraits of Grace and Calvin Coolidge.

Calvin Coolidge's electric exercise horse along with chaps, boots, shirt and hat worn by him on vacation in South Dakota in 1927 were shipped to California where they were the centerpiece for a *Presidents as Cowboys* exhibit at the Autry National Center in Los Angeles and later at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, TX. The items will be on loan until February 2009.

The Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library has purchased a five volume set of Calvin Coolidge's law books for \$5,000. The set was purchased by Coolidge in 1895, and bear his signature of "J. Calvin Coolidge". This signature is valuable because shortly after this, Coolidge dropped the "J." from his signature. The library already owns a letter from Coolidge to his father stating that he had purchased the law books. The books appear on Coolidge's list of influential books. Although the books have been fairly heavily used, they have no other markings.

The ballot box used by Calvin Coolidge that was on permanent display in the Coolidge Museum was on loan to be exhibited at the President Coolidge State Historic Site in Plymouth, VT from Memorial Day to Columbus Day as part of an exhibit on Coolidge's election.

The Northampton State Hospital Time Capsule display was installed temporarily in the lobby of the Mayor's Office at City Hall.

### **Friends of Forbes**

The Friends of Forbes held their annual garden tour on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. Friends of Forbes received \$3,400 from the Florence Savings Bank Customer Choice Awards having received 320 votes, the second highest of any nominee this year. The elected officers are: Kari Knapp, president; Christine Nolan, vice president; Tim Umbach, Treasurer; and Mikki Michon, Secretary.

The Friends of Lilly Library and Forbes Library jointly hosted an Edible Books benefit program at Lilly Library on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Statistics**

Statistics indicated that although it appears that the library has plateaued in some areas, there were in fact changes in definitions and more accuracy in counting which do not reflect actual percentages. Holdings decreased 15% due to a large weeding effort and more accurate counting. For ease of use, shelves will be no more than 2/3 full, and that top and bottom shelves not be used if possible. Overall circulation was down 1%, however with the decrease in open hours, it was actually up 5% when considered hourly. Also Lilly Library reopened this year and joined CWMARS, which negatively affected both attendance and circulation at Forbes. The installation of the outside book drop at Forbes caused a drop in attendance figures since hundreds of books daily are returned without anyone entering the building representing a change in usage patterns more than an actual decrease in usage. Attendance at children's programming is up 42% and volunteerism is also up. The number of library cardholders decreased, but that was most likely due to a transfer in CWMARS from Forbes to Lilly Library. Florence residents are now considered separately from Northampton, resulting in a large increase in non-resident circulation. The number of reference questions decreased reflecting a trend of patrons finding answers to simple questions on the internet, so the questions that are asked have become more difficult and time consuming.