

Forbes Library Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2019

Almost every computer on the first and second floor of the building is in use. At the reference desk a librarian is helping a student find an assigned reading while another staff member comes out from behind the desk and heads off to the stacks with a patron to find a book. The area around the circulation desk is buzzing, but not far away a young woman quietly works on a puzzle. In the Community Room staff from the MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center are offering their weekly workshop for job seekers. Upstairs library staff are arranging chairs for a reading by local authors chosen by the Writer In Residence. Out on the sidewalk an impatient four-year-old tugs on her father's hand, eager to get to a program in the Children's Department. It's business as usual at Forbes Library.



Connecting Past, Present, & Future

- Forbes kicked off its 125th anniversary celebration with "Our Community Sing" in late September. Over 250 people picnicked on the grounds and, led by local musicians, all joined in singing songs under the full moon. The event was inspired by events that took place 100 years ago on the library's lawn right at the end of WWI.
- We added a bronze casting of the Sojourner Truth maquette sculpture by Gregory Stone to the library's permanent art collection
- Forbes Library was one of a few public library recipients nationwide for the Community Webs grant to expand web archiving in local history collections. We are building a digital archive from scratch that truly reflects our rich, varied and "weird" cultural community, the arts and music scenes, and the rich tradition of activism in Western Massachusetts for researchers today and in the future.



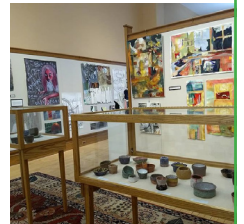
Community Hub

A "third place" – not home, not workplace – an alternative to both. A safe place where all are welcome, where opinions can be voiced and shared without fear, where members of different social networks can encounter and learn from one another. A place where education and entertainment can mingle.

- Meeting room use was up by 7.5% continuing the trend of the last 5 years
- Forbes hosted dozens of tour groups including visits by students from our local schools and the Center for New Americans (CNA) that included signing up for library cards
- The Hosmer Gallery featured a show by Northampton High School students in May, one of many well attended shows this year.

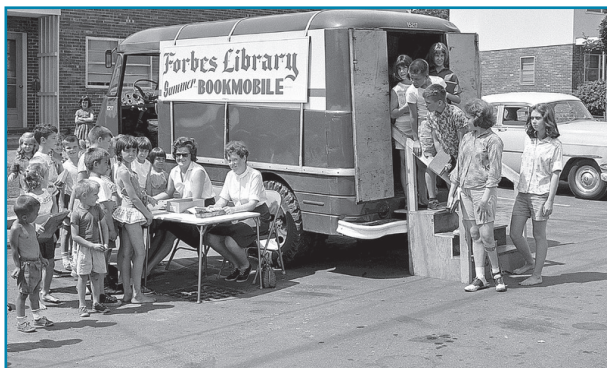


"I am so happy to have my new library card. There is so much here for me."



"Forbes library is truly one of the joys of my life, and I cannot imagine how much less my life would be without it! Thank you, thank you, thank you Forbes!"

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Budget and Operations

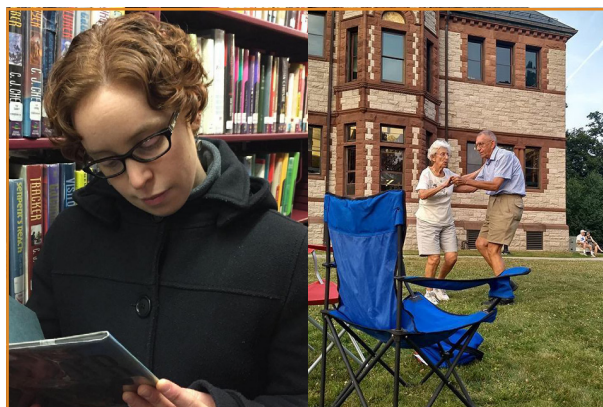
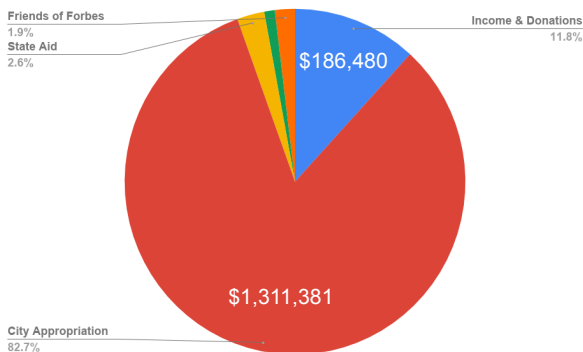
- Our special collections now have their own climate control system so that the collections are safe and sound
- The library's original windows are getting a makeover thanks to funds from the City of Northampton and the Community Preservation Act
- After careful consideration and discussion with the managers of the library's endowment, in April the Trustees made a commitment to divest the endowment of fossil fuel companies.
- 6,000 hours of volunteer service were given at Forbes Library last year with a total value of \$150,000.
- The FY19 operating budget included a 3% increase in our city appropriation.

The City of Northampton provides just over 80% of the library's operating budget that includes staff salaries, utilities and basic maintenance.

The remaining 20% comes largely from trust fund income and donations including from the Friends of Forbes Library and is a critical part of the library's budget. It includes funding for books and materials, technology, programming and so much more.



We are very grateful to all of our donors for their contributions to Forbes Library this year. Forbes Library has an important educational and life enriching role in the lives of our community members and it is only with your support that we are able to fulfill our mission.



Access & Innovation

- We increased our hours by bringing back summer Saturdays and extending Tuesdays and Thursdays
- In 2018 our Outreach Delivery Service (ODS) to homebound residents celebrated adding its 100th patron and it's 29th volunteer
- E-book circulation increased by over 40% this year to a new all time high
- We have eliminated overdue fines for kids and teens, removing a barrier for many families.

"Reading sustains me and when I am unable to come to the library myself, I want someone to do this for me when that time comes."



Children's & Teens

- Children's book circulation increased by 5.6%
- Over 500 youth participated in our Summer Reading Program that helps kids retain and learn so that they are off to a good start in school in September
- Northampton teachers were given extended borrowing privileges to better support students
- Teens produced podcasts after learning how to record and edit audio files at the library.



FORBES library

NORTHAMPTON'S PUBLIC LIBRARY

forbeslibrary.org • 413-587-1011

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