



**Report presented to the Board of Trustees
by Margaret Morrissey, Director
August 2023 (emailed 9.1.2023 – no meeting)**

ARIS (Annual Report of Information Survey)

- The annual statistical part of the state report was filed 8/16. New questions about challenge to materials and programs. Working on the financial report, due October 6.

Book Banning

- Jacob Edwards Library along with other libraries in the area hosted Ashley Hope Perez, author of *Out of Darkness* (2015) and one of the ten most challenged books reported by ALA.
- Senator Cyr from the Cape has filed a bill SD.2673. <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/SD2673>

Budget FY 2024

- Board approved \$45,000 (7/25/2024) to fund Books and Materials to augment the operating budget of \$45,000.

Building

- Globe Signs has completed the refurbishment of one of the JEL mahogany – the Main Street sign and it is in place. The second sign is underway.
- The door handle at the North entrance is malfunctioning. Locksmith has repaired the lock. We are looking to replace the door locks
- Since 6/14 we have been experiencing intermittent issues with the elevator that were eventually resolved. We have been advised that the elevator is at 'end of life' and we need to consider a modernization program. TK Elevator has bought US Ascension 2000 elevators and has developed a 'modernization plan'. \$120K is the quoted cost and any upgrades to the electrical service, fire service etc., will be additional costs. A request was submitted to the ARPA Committee for funding and I presented the request at the 8/31 meeting.
- Replace one of the security cameras. Not operating since a power outage 7/16. American Alarm still waiting on parts.
- DPW has trimmed the hedges and shrubs. The perimeter of the parking lot has been cut back. A request to have the trees trimmed has been submitted.
- The library was gifted two large plants with interesting foliage by Bernadette Meade.

Chess Park

- The Town Accountant will set up an account to receive donations from the public, once the outline design is available and fundraising can commence. Anticipate a rendering of the chess park by Joe Coan, landscape designer to be available for the September 26th meeting.

Children's Room

- The décor in the room has been changed to reflect Back to School and Fall.
- Programs offered in addition to the regular Story Time (Wednesdays and Fridays), Lego Club (Tuesdays and Thursdays), Crafty Wednesdays, STEAM and others.
- *Young Scientists Spring II* programs part of YFCP has been very successful. *Wiggles and Giggles* another YFCP sponsored program will resume in September.
- Southbridge Cultural Council funded the following events
 - Mike Bent 7/24 - 43 in attendance.
 - Diane Edgecomb - storyteller 7/31
 - Soap Making with Garine 8/7

Collection Development

- A 35 mm film was found in the Holmes Ammidown History Room and Archive in a can with a brief note indicating it was of Sacred Heart Church. It was a professional movie "Exclusive Pictures Taken for the Strand Theatre by Central Motion Picture Co. C.L. Raimondo Photographer". The film was thought to be in poor condition and it was vacuumed and is not deteriorated. I have spoken with Anthony Labbate, Preservation Manager at the Eastman Museum. He has provided some images of what we can expect from the digital version He was encouraging about the results we could anticipate from this process. A 4k scan will be done which would include editing and color correction. The funding for the project has been provided by Cornerstone Bank (\$500) and Southbridge Historical Commission (\$400.25) and Savers Bank have offered to cover the remaining cost. The film is at the George Eastman Museum and the process for digitizing has begun. 1,000 ft of film was salvageable and 50 ft. was destroyed by rust and environmental issues.

Finance

- The Treasurer/Collector confirmed the transfer of \$288,249.03 to the Endowment Fund 7/27/2023, leaving \$75,000 in the M&T Bank, as requested.

FOJEL

- Booksale at the Cornerstone Bank event. Members of the Friends will be in attendance.
- The Friends sponsored some of the current program offerings.

Garden

- The planting by Trustee Bernadette Meade is thriving and sets off the building nicely. Request to purchase the *Twistee Birdhouse* from the August exhibit by Eric's Aviaries, for the JEL garden

Grants and Donations

- Request by the board to set up a Gift and Donation page on the JEL website has been set up and accessible at the following link
<https://www.jacobedwardslibrary.org/Pages/Index/227455/giving>
- Starting to liaise with potential performers and presenters to work on Local Cultural Council grants. LCC deadline 10/17.

Local History

- Working with the MOTT (MA Office of Travel and Tourism) grant group to compile a database of historic buildings, as part of a series of walking tours that are being planned.

Long Range Plan

- Staff is focusing on services to the disabled community. A wish list of Sensory and Memory Kits are being put together to offer patrons- following up on a recommendation from last month's professional training.
- "Helping Libraries to be Autism-Ready" training from Web Junction

Outreach

- Attended Annual Law Enforcement Night Out 8/1 on the Town Common.
- Participated in the MOTT (MA Office of Travel and Tourism) grant meeting 8/8 and 8/22. The group is developing an Historical Walking Tour.
- Attended the Southbridge Business Partnership meeting 7/26 at Salle Notre Dame.
- Met with Area Library Directors to discuss items of mutual interest 8/28

Proctoring

- Exam proctored by the Adult Services Librarian in August.

Programs

- Eric Kalwarczyk of Eric's Aviaries is the artist of the month. The ornamental and functional bird houses and nesting boxes were a stunning addition to the library.
- A Facebook Live broadcast was conducted during the Meet and Greet 8/3, as well as the SCTV recorded the show for uploading to YouTube. The Southbridge News also covered the event.
- *Ending the Silence* a presentation by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) 8/1. The two presenters provided a message of hope and recovery and encourages participants to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health conditions.
- *How to Fight Book Bans and Stand Up for the Right to Read* an advocacy presentation by Ashley Hope Perez 8/2 that was sponsored by area libraries of Central MA. Funded by the Friends of JEL.
- *(More) Jewish Life in Song* with The Wholesale Klezmer Band 8/10 was broadcast on Facebook Live and recorded by SCTV for YouTube. The concert was sponsored by the Southbridge Cultural Council.

- Book Club discussed *Book Lovers* by Emily Henry 8/16
- Staff from Old Sturbridge Academy presented Americorps Information session 8/17.
- Afternoon Author Talks *I Shouldn't Tell You This* by Courtney Kuketz 8/23.
- *The American Songbook* featuring Quintessential Brass 8/24 was sponsored by the Southbridge Cultural Council.
- *A Journey Through the Roots of American Popular Music* presented by Jon Waterman on 8/31 was sponsored by the Southbridge Cultural Council.
- The ongoing programs - Tuesday Knitting and Chess on Monday evenings are well attended.
- Game Night for all ages on Mondays from 5:30-7:30 this summer was not as popular as we hoped.
- Chess resumes in September.

Reference

- During the month many research questions were responded to, mostly on genealogy and vital records.

Safety and Security

- Police officers are doing pedestrian duty on Main Street and are continuing to drop by the library frequently to do a walk through.

Staff

- Megan Garlie resigned from her position as Library Assistant 8/29. She has a new position at the Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology at Harvard, as an Assistant Editor/Indexer.
- The S-5 Library Assistant position has been advertised on the MBLC job listing and the Town of Southbridge's HR page. A flyer with the information is also posted in the library.

Summer Feeding

- Volunteers from Open Sky are staffed the food service at the library for five weeks.
- The program finished on Friday, August 4th.

Summer Reading

- Summer Reading registrations
Children = 167 Teens = 21 Adults = 34

Tax Abatement

- There are five program participants work a 2 hour shift each week until they reach 65 hours.

Technology

- The AWE Early Learning computer in the Children's Room from 2014 is being replaced with a bilingual Spanish computer. An attractive 15% discount was offered and the computer was purchased for \$3,272 from state aid.

- ComCat system upgrade 8/2. No interruption to service.
- Postings were made to social media
- CWMARS staff migrating all of their servers to the Google Cloud 9 Platform July 1. The upgrade for JEL was scheduled for Monday, 8/7.
- New computers added to the network during the CWMARS visit here on 8/7.
- MS Office presented some difficulties in transferring to the new computers but is available on all staff and public machines since 8/28
- Mobile Beacon (hotspots) system upgrade still ongoing. Until completed, we are unable to turn off the service if the hotspot is not returned on time.

Teen

- The monthly *Take and Make* craft featured pipe cleaner dragonflies
- Teen Advisory Group (TAG)
- *Dungeons & Dragons* –final program in the series 7/25

Training/Professional Development

- Attended the MMA procurement training (basic) 8/15
- Fighting for the First webinar attended by director and adult services librarian

Trustees

- Town Treasurer has transferred \$288,249.03 to the Endowment Fund, as per request placed by Gary Bridgman, Finance Director on behalf of the Board. Balance remaining in the M&T Bank is \$75,000.00
- The board meetings have been entered on the JEL Calendar available on the website.
<http://engagedpatrons.org/EventsCalendar.cfm?SiteID=9899&thisMonth=9&thisYear=2024>