



**Report presented to the Board of Trustees
by Margaret Morrissey, Director
presented August 28, 2025**

ARIS (Annual Report Information Survey)

- The first part of the state aid report for the MA Board of Library Commissioners has been submitted.

Building

- Elevator not working after a power outage the previous evening (not during JEL service hours). It needed to be restarted and was operational again. The modernization of the elevator is still needed. The response on the MA Office of Disability grant application is not expected until October.
- Waiting for a response from Norel Services regarding the audibles on the second floor. They are still researching the issue. I reached George Aguilar 8/13 and he assured me that he would research the issue with his team and get back to me with a proposal.
- Requested quote for the restoration and insulation of the windows in the 1914 and 1966 sections of the building. P and P Contractors have conducted a site visit. Researching whether there is a de-leading certificate on file. Followed up and still waiting for a response.
- Guardian Energy Management installed two automatic dampers in the 1914 attic to ventilate the area 8/4. A tech returned 8/6 to review the work and a thermostat will be installed.
- Two of the four LED lights at the sculptures were vandalized. DPW repaired 8/7.
- The Salle Notre Dame stained glass transom given in memory of Paul R. Tremblay by the Tremblay Family was refurbished and installed by Gabriel McCarthy and team 8/10.
- Jim Wales Pest Control quarterly service 8/15
- Curbside sign installed by Globe Signs, on the wall, at the north entrance 8/28.

Chess Park

- Group met 8/21.
- Procedure in place. Cash and cheques can be processed by JEL staff
- Donors may use Venmo and PayPal through UniBank to donate to the project. Donor donations went live 8/18.
- Splash page still needed on Town of Southbridge webpage to introduce the Chess Park, when donating online.

Children's Room

- Monday evening 'entertainment' programs finished 8/18, as students are back in school
 - Ice Cream Social 8/2 as performer did not show.
 - Mike Bent/Abracadabra 8/11 – LCC Grant
 - The Reptile Nook 8/18 funded by the Olive I and Anthony A Borgatti fund at Greater Worcester Community Foundation.
- Summer Reading was very successful and lots of new readers connected with the library.

Circulation

Staff contacting patrons with overdue materials is successful. In some cases, the contact information does not work. Records are updated.

Hotspots are circulating again.

Collection Development

- Displays created by staff to promote the library materials.
 - Family Fun Month
 - 2025 Reading Challenge- Choose a book whose protagonist is a teenager or a senior citizen
 - Movie Tree - Action/Adventure
 - National Sandwich Month
- The library has not renewed its subscription to Newspapers.com (North East edition) due to low usage.
- Indexing the Norman E. Leathers, Land Surveyor blueprints for improved access.
- In discussion with Mike Monahan, New England Microfilm to gauge the cost of obtaining master copies of the various Southbridge newspapers that we have received approval to digitize.

Digital Commonwealth – Boston Public Library

- Met with Jessica Colati, Preservation Specialist, MBLC to discuss the newspaper digitization and to ask for assistance to move the project forward 7/30. Have sent follow up email and waiting for a response.
- Still waiting for a response from Boston Public Library regarding the newspaper digitization project.
 - In a follow up call to Jake Sadow of the Boston Public Library (BPL) the schedule for digitizing the Southbridge News has been delayed into 2026. Given the state of the economy and changes happening with lightning speed, I have requested that BPL would harvest the copies that have already been digitized by the newspaper, for which we have been given unconditional access. Apparently, this is a new process and the staff will need to discuss and decide whether funding is available in the new fiscal year (July 1). Awaiting a response as one wants to show our appreciation of the generosity of the Stonebridge Press and Salmon Publishing to share the back issues of the newspaper.

FOJEL

- Meeting 8/4
- Funding for Jeanne Douillard "The French in New England" 8/21, \$100

- The Friends hosted the Southbridge Business Partnership 8/25. There were about 35 people in attendance. The event was recorded by SCTV and will be available on YouTube channel.
- Bernadette Mead gave a presentation on the Friends and on the Chess Park and the fundraising campaign.

Grants and Donations

- Waiting for result of the application to the MA Office of Disability Municipal ADA Accessibility grant in the amount of \$250,000.00 towards the cost of modernizing the US Ascension 2000 elevator. A report was commissioned from Syska Hennessey Group (May 2025) and the estimated cost is \$340,000.00.

Long Range Plan

- Staff continues to promote the electronic and streaming services subscribed to by the library. Staff is also working on other promotional materials.

Museum Passes

Outreach

Poet Laureate

- Waiting on a response from the administration regarding the setting up of a prize from the donations from poetry anthology *Southbridge: My Triggering Town* by Bill Tremblay.

Policy

- Draft policy on Emergency Closing – discussion to continue at today's board meeting.
- Area libraries and boards have been discussing charging a membership fee to out of state patrons. Topic is on the agenda for today's meeting.
- Display and Art Exhibit policy has been updated, as per vote 7/22

Programs

- Gateway Players are celebrating their 50th Anniversary. The library is hosting an exhibit of their memorabilia and photographs. The meet and greet on 8/7 - 30 attended. SCTV was present to record and produce for YouTube.
- Meditation (3 sessions)
- Celebrating 50 Years of Gateway 8/7: 30
- Immigrants: The Facts, The Fiction 8/11: 33
- Badger & Nault Concert 8/14: 23
- The French in New England 8/21: 20
- Book Club (*The Magic All Around* by Jennifer Moorman) 8/20: 5
- Quintessential Brass (8/28): 37

Reference:

- 113 transactions
- 1-on-1 Tech Trainings: 2
- Obituaries: 2
- Research
 - Hamilton Woolen Mills

Safety and Security

- Director spoke to patron who was disrespectful to staff member 7/21
- Open can of beer found on the side of the photocopier 7/30
- Police officers have been doing walk-throughs more frequently.
- Draft procedure on ICE crafted and submitted to Town Manager for review. Waiting for a response.

Service

- Library will be closed September 1st in honor of Labor Day

State Aid Report – Financial

- The report is due at the MBLC on October 3rd, 2025.

Summer Eats

- The library participated again in the federal Summer Eats program which co-incided with the Summer Reading dates. Lunch was served Monday-Friday 11 am -1 pm.

Summer Reading

- 2025 theme is “Level Up at your Library”. The program was conducted from June 30th to August 8th.
- The adult summer reading program had 139 participants. Winners were Mackenzie W (chess set), Elaine R (bread maker), and Nancy W (garden tools)
- The teen summer reading program had 30 participants. 12 gift cards to local businesses were distributed over the course of the 6-week program.

Technology

- Created the eNewsletter/social media/displays/statistics/promotional materials/collection development / website maintenance
- Staff is reviewing the draft website designed by CyberOptik checking its functionality, accessibility and compliance and will present a list of comments to the developer next week.
- The new website needs to be in place by October 2025.
- Ockers training is scheduled for September 4th
- ImageTek serviced the microfilm machine 8/13.

- Webinar Replay: Introducing EnvisionWare EasyPay Station

CW MARS tickets

- Library funding message displayed on our catalog and on public computers

Town of Southbridge tickets

- MUNIS access requested for Laurie