

ANNUAL REPORT FY2020

JULY 2019–JUNE 2020



Kellogg-Hubbard Library

135 Main Street | Montpelier, Vermont 05602 | 802-223-3338 | kellogghubbard.org

Serving Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex, Montpelier and Worcester

Library Services Report

Carolyn Brennan

LIBRARY DIRECTOR



2019-2020 has been a year of evolution in Library Services.

After reducing Library administration to two positions, opportunities emerged in other service areas. Between July and December 2019 different, and some new, librarians took over core services like collection

development, interlibrary loan, technical services, adult programs and children's programs. In January and February, we caught our breath, though at the time it felt like gearing up for the year ahead.

In March and April, we amplified our existing digital services and added new ones. The Library website became more robust than ever before and now patrons can do nearly everything digitally that they used to have to do in-person. When we couldn't lend physical books, we focused on digital books and audios available via the Libby app. We added copies of popular titles and award winners for our patrons only, reducing wait times and

making more content available for KHL patrons out of a normally shared collection. We added a few titles on Flipster, a digital magazine app, and plan to add others later in 2020. We also added Kanopy, an oft requested streaming video app with content for all ages.

In April, May and June we offered curbside library services, resuming lending in the safest, hands-free manner possible. In June we loaned more than 19,000 items this way. We extended curbside to each of our member towns, so that our patrons could pick up their library materials close to home. We also resumed deliveries to homebound patrons.

In July we began to cautiously fill other service gaps; primarily public computers, internet access and printing; a crucial service for those of us that don't have access to a computer or the internet at home.

Looking to the year ahead, Library services will continue to evolve to meet the needs of our communities, finding ways to remain available if the Library should have to close its doors again. We are keeping a close eye on strategies from our library neighbors in Vermont, across the country and around the world.

Nonprofit Report

Jessie Lynn

NONPROFIT DIRECTOR



"The Library will endure; it is the universe."

—Jorge Luis Borges

This quote was at the end of a 2019 documentary *The Booksellers* which explores the changes to the rare book market in New York. We recently added

this film to our physical collection at the library and I enjoyed it thoroughly as a lover of books myself.

And what an apt quote for 2020. As booksellers and libraries have both experienced, when the world shuts down, people want books! They crave the literary connection to other human minds and what a joy it is to get to feed that connection.

At KHL, we will endure. We have lived through the polio epidemic, the Spanish Flu, depressions, floods, fires, vandalism and now, Covid-19. In my role as

the financial manager, my job is to help steer the organization through this time. In FY20, as you can see from Sue Zeller's report, we ended the year on very stable footing. This put us in great shape as we head into a fiscal year with much more uncertainty.

We've reduced our budget by almost 5% in anticipation of a reduced capacity for fundraising without our monthly booksale income and knowing that we can't host our biggest in-person fundraiser, *An Evening at the Library*, in December. Instead, we are developing other fundraising initiatives, including a monthly giving program to ensure a solid, predictable income stream from sustaining donors.

With all of our lives so greatly altered, each of us has had to slow down and reassess what is truly important. I have been so grateful for the comradery and companionship of my fellow co-director Carolyn and the incredible staff here at the library during this time. Their good cheer and sheer determination to continue to offer services to our community is a testament to their love of this library.

We all look forward to seeing you again, soon.

FY2020 BY THE NUMBERS



Circulation

288,602 physical books, DVDs, CDs, and magazines circulated

25,638 materials circulated digitally (e-books, audio downloads, Flipster and Kanopy)

2,927 interlibrary items borrowed & loaned



Programs

174 adult library programs held with **3,162** total attendees

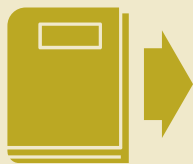
257 children's library programs held with **8,045** total attendees



Online

8,451 uses of public computers

39,567 wifi connections in the library



Outreach

Outreach volunteers and staff made:

290 outreach visits to member towns

103 home delivery visits

President's Report

Amy Cunningham

BOARD PRESIDENT



As I began to compose this letter, all of my thoughts were focused around the library's response to Covid 19. The flexibility and creativity of our library staff, the generosity of our donors, and the understanding of our patrons ... there is much to be said there.

And while our Covid 19 era feels like it has lasted (at least!) twelve months, there are actually many pre-pandemic achievements to acknowledge and celebrate in this last year for our library.

- It was just 12 months ago that we wished Tom McKone a fond farewell after his 5 years of loyal service to this library.
- It was just last summer that we began a new chapter of library leadership with Carolyn Brennan and Jessie Lynn as our co-directors.
- It was just last January we successfully concluded the fundraising for our *Give the Library a Lift!* special projects campaign. In the last year, we have made considerable progress on completing building projects with those funds.
- It was just last December that we packed the library to celebrate author Kekla Magoon at *An Evening at the Library*.

And then came that day in mid-March when we escalated to Level 4 of our emergency plan and closed the library to patrons for the first time in living memory.

Since then, the staff of KHL has responded to this challenge with great flexibility and creativity. "Pivot" is terribly overused in our Covid-19 era, but they have embodied it. From PoemCity online to Facebook Live story time; from the complicated logistics of curbside service to the projects they took on from home, they have each changed course to service our community in extraordinary ways.

The building and collections are tools. It's the people that make a library great. I think we have all understood that to be true, but the collective and individual responses to this crisis shine a bright light on that fact.

There are many uncertainties ahead. As we work together in the coming months to navigate these new waters, please know that the safety and wellbeing of the staff and community are our very highest priorities.

Treasurer's Report

Susan Zeller

BOARD TREASURER

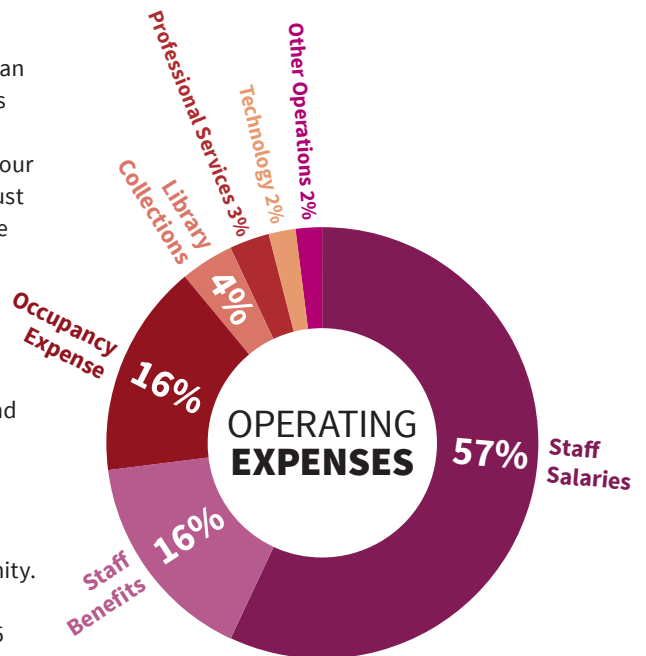
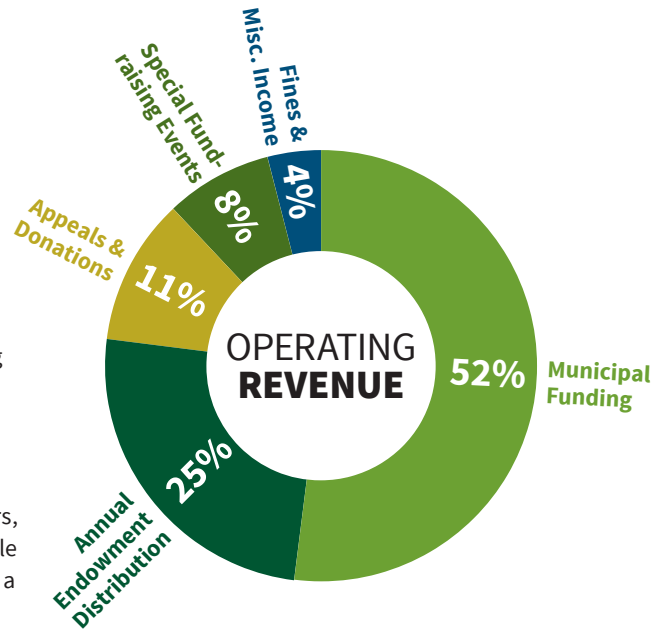


The very successful completion of our *Give the Library a Lift!* (GLL) capital campaign – our first capital campaign in almost 15 years – was quickly followed the Governor's COVID-19 state of emergency declaration, requiring physically closing the Library and

remote work by employees for several months. The Library staff moved quickly to continue to serve our communities online and with curbside pick-up. With excellent planning and management by the Co-Directors, and the support of our tremendous donors, we were able to close FY 2020 with healthy reserve funds in what was a most unusual year for operations.

The Library's historic building is a treasured resource, though an ongoing challenge to maintain and afford. As an independent nonprofit, we are responsible for all repairs and maintenance ourselves, from snow shoveling to landscaping, cleaning to plumbing, to properly insuring our assets. It takes a good portion of our annual budget to just keep up with the ongoing maintenance. This is one of the reasons we recently set target balances for several of our reserve funds, including an Occupancy Reserve and a Technology and Innovation Reserve.

This is my 5th year serving as a Library Trustee and my final year in the role of Treasurer. It's been a pleasure and an honor to serve this beloved organization. I continue to be humbled by the enthusiasm and devotion this organization, through its management, Trustees and employees, demonstrates in serving the City and our member towns, as a center of learning, joy and community. The financials for FY20 are still in progress and will be available in the fall. Library financials for the previous 5 years are available on our website: kellogghubbard.org/financial-information.



FY2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- We upgraded the **East Montpelier meeting room space**.
- We installed a **water fountain**.
- We installed **automatic door openers** to our basement doors.
- We refinished the **basement floor** landing.
- We made **A/V upgrades** to the Hayes Room.
- We purchased new **self-checkout kiosks**.

East Montpelier meeting room renovations.



Give the Library a Lift! Update



BY STEVE GOLD, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

The Library's multi-year Capital Campaign, called *Give the Library a Lift!* (GLL), came to a very successful conclusion in January of 2020. That fundraising effort, counting gifts and pledges, was supported by more than 200 individuals, families and organizations and exceeded its goal of \$600,000. This has put the Library in wonderful shape to continue implementation of the 25 different projects in our building.

That implementation was initiated prior to the completion of fundraising, under the very able leadership, first of the Library's previous Director, Tom McKone, and, for the past year, of Nonprofit Director Jessie Lynn, because some physical plant problems couldn't wait. Specifically, the refinishing of the exterior woodwork on the addition, and the refurbishment of the windows in the historical building, both demanded attention as soon as possible. The windows project was partially funded by a grant from Vermont Historic Preservation.

This spring, two more GLL projects have been completed successfully: the installation of a cooling unit in the Hayes room, which was partially funded by a matching grant from the Vermont Arts Council; and some critical masonry work - the recapping of a leaking chimney and the replacing of deteriorated mortar, both on the exterior of the historic building. Two more now are underway: a new book drop for the Main St. entranceway will soon be in place, and our most ambitious project, the upgrade and modernization of our 40-year-old elevator is scheduled to begin by early fall.

In order to be able to effectively carry out the entire scope of GLL projects, the library planned to hire a project manager to oversee the many complex aspects of all the projects. We are very fortunate to have found an excellent person to fulfil this role. Richard Horchler, recently retired from his own business, was sought out by Jessie, who was familiar with his work and knew he was just the person we needed. Rich has already started putting his extensive experience and capabilities to work.

In these challenging times, with the Library's services impacted negatively by the pandemic, as have so many of our core community institutions, it is tremendously uplifting to see such tangible positive things happening for KHL's home. We are giving the Library a lift, not figuratively but actually, both a facelift — windows, masonry, new book drop, and, soon, in the renewed "lift," the elevator. You can follow our progress on the KHL website at kellogghubbard.org/lift.




The freshly recapped library chimney, part of the GLL renovations.




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Children's Library Report



BY MELISS BUNCE, CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING LIBRARIAN

During this last year, the Children's Library continued its high circulation, presented robust and varied programming, and increased the emphasis on Collection Development. Roles shifted as I began working in October, specializing in Children's programming and Nicole Westbom transitioned to working in Children's collection development. With the renovation of the East Montpelier Room last summer, we were able to provide another after-school space; this immediately became a very popular destination.

When COVID closed the library, children's programming carried on with twice weekly story times Livestreamed on our Facebook page. Nicole, guest staff, and I have provided them continuously ever since. The Summer Reading Program transformed into a combination of digital offerings with some in-person programs in each of our member towns. The schedule includes story times for preschoolers and older kids, a weekly craft program, socially distanced Shakespeare Camp, and most of the presenters that we had engaged earlier.

There is a significant silver lining to the COVID situation. While registrations for Summer Reading are about half of what they usually are, this is offset by the tremendous increase in the viewing of our story times, craft tutorials, and special online programs. So many children that ordinarily don't participate in or attend a program now have the opportunity to do this from home.

Given the uncertainty of the future, it is challenging to plan for this fall. However, I can say with confidence that we will continue to offer a robust and varied number of programs for our young customers. The online preschool story times will continue indefinitely. I have a lot of different ideas for how to offer programs for school age kids, depending on what is safe as we move forward. I plan to partner with schools, organizations, and local businesses whenever possible; the response and support from them this summer has been very gratifying.



Top left: Lennon and Sahasra rehearse during Shakespeare Camp 2019. Bottom left: Sam and Dinah enjoy outside Story Time at the library.

Save the date: December 5, 2020

An Evening to **Support** the Library

We may not be able to celebrate at the Library but we can still celebrate from home. Details to come.



Library Programs During Covid

Outreach

**BY HEATHER KRALIK,
OUTREACH COORDINATOR**

From July 2019 until March 2020 our Outreach Coordinator and volunteers made visits to daycares in our member towns, filled the library book swaps and loaned books at local community events and the Library annexes.

In the summer and fall of 2019, we orchestrated summer story times and preschool visits with crafts, and book giveaways at locations in five of our communities: Berlin Elementary School and Berlin Fire Department, East Montpelier Elementary, Doty Elementary in Worcester, the Adamant Methodist Church and Maple Corner Community Center in Calais.

Since March, we have reimagined Outreach; visiting our five member communities on a weekly basis to deliver library materials and offer free give-away books for kids.

Our popular book groups, which previously met in Adamant and Middlesex have continued through summer 2020 by using Zoom. This year we have read a total of 7 books with 41 participants. Our last book group “zoomed” in June 2020 and we look forward to continuing in August 2020.

PoemCity 2020

**BY MICHELLE SINGER,
PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

2020 was PoemCity’s 11th year and like almost everything else this year, it did not go as planned! With just weeks until we were set to hang 400 accepted poems, 86 from poets new to PoemCity, and launch 30 poetry-focused programs, the library followed orders from the state to close and PoemCity was suspended.

However, also like many other aspects of life during Covid-19, not all was lost. We were able to transition ten of our programs online and post a PoemCity poem-a-day on our Facebook page. We provided viewing access to all the poem broadside posters on the library website and even collected additional poems inspired by the community experience of the coronavirus quarantine.

One intrepid young poet even coined a perfect new term for PoemCity in quarantine times: PoemHouse! Thomas Brown of Calais Elementary School didn’t let the delay of PoemCity slow him down as he penned and then posted his original poetry at home.



We captured poetry readings through Zoom from poets originally scheduled to read at PoemCity like: Judith Chalmer & Scudder Parker, Aaron Marcus & Sam Sanders, Sydney Lea & Tim Mayo, Geza Tatrallyay & George Longenecker, and Sean Prentiss & Jesse LoVasco. PoemCity poets also sent in videos of themselves reading their poems. All the readings continue to be available online at kellogghubbard.org/poemcity.

At left: Children waiting to march with the library on July 3, 2019.

Meet New Library Trustees

Dan Greene



What made you want to become a library trustee?

For the last year I have been using the Library as a base of operations for tutoring students. While there I have seen the excellent service provided to the patrons from the cities and towns the

Library serves. When an opening was announced for a trustee from Berlin I knew I wanted to be part of this excellent institution.

What are you reading?

I usually bounce between reading two or three books at a time. Currently I am reading *Past Imperfect* by Julian Fellowes, Hilary Mantel's *The Mirror and The Light*, and a book on the artist Delacroix by Sebastian Allard.

What is the most surprising thing you learned about the library since becoming a trustee?

Being a retired school librarian I felt I had a handle on the "book side" of the library, but I did not realize how complicated it was to successfully maintain the physical building.

Sarah Seidman



What made you want to become a library trustee?

As a longtime KH supporter, I wanted to do my part to help the library prosper for many years to come. Being a trustee has already made me more aware of the many ways that the library helps

equalize educational opportunities for all parts of our central Vermont community.

What are you reading?

I just finished Leif Enger's *So Young Brave and Handsome* and am about to start Jeanine Cummins' *American Dirt*. I miss the browsing the library shelves for surprises!

What is the most surprising thing you learned about the library since becoming a trustee?

I have been impressed by the co-directors' attention to all the details of running a business, and the library is a business. Budgeting, fundraising, projects to improve and sustain our historic building, expanding our offerings, staff management; above all: taking good care of our most important asset, our reading community.

Dan Groberg



What made you want to become a library trustee?

The Kellogg-Hubbard plays such an important role in our community. It goes well beyond the ability to borrow books, serves as a third space for so many. It's an honor to steward this institution.

What are you reading?

Most of my reading right now is with my two-year-old daughter. Some current favorites include *Are You My Mother?* and *Cars and Trucks and Things That Go*.

What is the most surprising thing you learned about the library since becoming a trustee?

The tour of the elevator control room was pretty enlightening.

Graham Sherriff



What made you want to become a library trustee?

My children and I have been regular patrons of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library for many years. It has been a central part of our lives, whether for borrowing books, hanging out and reading, finding a

quiet space for work or study, events, and — of course — playing with Legos. We have a deep appreciation for

the Library, the wonderful people who work there, and the services it provides to everyone in our community. Also I am a librarian myself, at the University of Vermont's Howe Library, and I bring a professional commitment to supporting libraries. Serving the Kellogg-Hubbard as a trustee is another opportunity to support access to information, literacy, and the exchange of "intellectual energy" — but in my home community.

What are you reading?

I mostly read non-fiction, but summer is a good time to get lost in a good novel. I just finished Madeline Miller's *Circe*, which was a gripping read. It's a retelling of some Greek mythology that is many things, epic, lyrical, humble, powerful, dramatic, and

personal. Next up is Virginia Eubanks's *Automating Inequality*, which examines how algorithmic bias entrenches socioeconomic inequalities. My kids are really into Tintin (Herge) and Elephant and Piggie (Mo Willems) right now.

What is the most surprising thing you learned about the library since becoming a trustee?

For a small library, there is an astonishing amount of energy and activity behind the scenes! The co-directors, staff, and volunteers work on so many things, provide so many services, and serve so many people. I am seeing how a small library can have a major impact on the wellbeing of a community.



CONTINUING TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY DURING COVID

Above, Jody Brown, left, picks up books from Steve and Nicole. Top right, George arrives to work, pandemic style.

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