



MARGARET E. HEGGAN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

A YEAR OF CHANGE: A New Look, a New Leader

The year 2014 was one of many positive changes at the Margaret E. Heggan Free Public Library. In January, construction began on the entrance to the library,

which greatly improved accessibility. Automatic doors and additional handicapped parking spaces were added, as well as a covered entrance, bicycle rack, and benches.

In March, I began as the new library director, bringing to Washington Township almost twenty years of experience in public libraries and thirteen years of experience as a library director. In the late spring, library board president Michael Allen resigned after serving on the board since 2007 and accomplishing a great deal. Under Mr. Allen's leadership, without additional cost to taxpayers, the size of the library doubled when we relocated to our current location. Library board member Joanne Robertson filled Mr. Allen's role as president, and Carole McNaughton was added to the library board as a new member.

Partly in collaboration with the library board, some library policies, procedures, and services were changed, mostly for the purpose of improving customer service. As of July 1, the library ceased charging patrons to borrow movies. Evening hours were extended until 9:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. More programs were offered during evening hours. We began a send-only fax service. Multiple copies of fiction books on the *New York Times* bestseller list are now purchased to add to our collection. Every staff member now wears a nametag that is visible to the public. Patrons are no



longer limited in checking out a certain number of materials, and they can check out as many materials as they'd like. Any age person can obtain a library card,

whereas children used to have to wait until age three. The children's department, which is now staffed almost all of the time when the library is open, is a place where materials can also be checked out and patrons can register for library cards. There is now a puppet theater along with various puppets which are well-loved by our young patrons.

As we look forward to 2015, we are excited about upcoming changes. A museum and garden pass program will begin, providing free access to eight area attractions. On Sundays, we will be open from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., and we will be open on Sundays all year long, even in the summer. We will be one of the only public libraries in New Jersey to be open on Sundays during the summer. We will also be launching our Funding Information Network, as designated by the Foundation Center, and providing an abundance of philanthropy information to local non-profit organizations. Also in 2015, we will be planning for a big milestone in 2016—our 50th year of providing library services to Washington Township residents!

Throughout the future, we will continue our mission, which states that our purpose is to connect, discover, and grow.

Sheila Mikkelson, Library Director

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2014

- National Library Week was celebrated in April. Once again, the library participated in the planning and marketing of “Meet the Authors,” an annual event sponsored by LOGICAL. Thirty-five local authors participated in the event which was held at the Monroe Township Library.
- In June, the library began S.M.I.L.L.E., a program that gives children the opportunity to read to a dog or cat.
- The Summer Reading Program kicked off in June. During the summer, 38,000 people visited the library and 3,469 attended children’s programs.
- On July 5, the library hosted a NJ Council for the Humanities speaker who presented “The Jersey Joke.”
- Wowbrary was introduced in July. Wowbrary sends weekly email notifications to people who sign up about new books, movies and music that have been added to the library’s collection.
- “Sharks in the Library,” held on November 10, brought the largest attendance ever to an adult library program.
- A new online resource, TumbleBooks, was introduced in December. Available in the library and at home, TumbleBooks are animated, talking picture books which teach kids the joy of reading.
- Many new programs were added including an American Girl Book Club, Game Night, Novel Mornings Book Discussion, and Catch Up with the Classics Book Discussion.

The Friends of the Margaret E. Heggan Free Public Library continue to be financially supportive of the library.

In 2014, the Friends funded the library’s movie license, wooden display cubes, octagonal display unit, the Caught in the Act staff award, and more!

2014 STATISTICS

CIRCULATION

210,121

4.67% increase from 2013

ITEMS ADDED TO COLLECTION

10,473

14.94% increase from 2013

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

13,896

23.20% increase from 2013

TOTAL PROGRAMS OFFERED

779

VISITORS

136,796

INTERLIBRARY LOANS SENT AND RECEIVED

783

REFERENCE QUESTIONS

17,204

NEW CARDHOLDERS

1,074

TOTAL CARDHOLDERS

39,812

INTERNET USERS

37,139

DOWNLOADABLE AUDIOBOOKS AND EBOOKS

6,425

LOGIN ITEMS SENT AND RECEIVED

13,278

OUTREACH

The library continues to reach out to the community and schools.

In 2014, the library had a presence at the following events or locations:

- Earth Day
- Washington Twp. Senior Center
- Super Saturday
- Olde Stone House Harvest Festival
- Back-to-School Night at Wedgewood Elementary School
- Third grade classes at Thomas Jefferson Elementary School
- Greenwood Park Dog Swim
- Cardinal Village
- ABC Express Preschool & Kindergarten
- A Place to Grow Daycare & Preschool
- Freshman orientations
- Washington Twp. Employee Health & Wellness Fair
- Washington Township Rotary

The library also collected food items for Mother’s Cupboard in November and collected coats for the annual HFM Coat Drive.

PARTNERSHIPS

During 2014, the library partnered with:

- Kennedy Health System to bring health related programs to the library. In 2014, Kennedy held six programs in the library.
- American Red Cross to host three blood drives.
- Bottino’s Shop Rite to present several children’s programs at the library to help children develop healthy eating habits.
- Washington Township Historic Preservation Commission to apply for and receive a \$500 NJ Council for the Humanities grant. The funds were used to present “The Frontmobile and the Bateman Manufacturing Iron Age Works” and create brochures.