

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at 7 pm
Thornton Room, Brooks Free Library
739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645

Agenda

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Executive Session - pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, § 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the Chair so declares
3. Approval of Minutes of Dec. 9 2015 Executive Session and Feb. 10, 2016 regular session
4. Public Comment
5. Reports:
 - A. Chairman
 - B. Library Director
 - C. Building & Grounds Committee
 - a) Update on Funding for Historic Preservation of Exterior
 - b) Update on Furniture for Doane Room
 - D. Liaison from Board of Selectman
 - E. Friends of Brooks Free Library
6. Correspondence:
7. Old Business:
 - A. FY17 Budget Request
 - B. Town Meeting Article – vote to withdraw
8. New Business:
 - A. Vote to Accept Donations
8. Possible one day closing or reduced open hours for staff training - Mass. Library Association conference in Hyannis May 16-18 Trustees' Report - discussion
9. Upcoming Meetings
 - A. Next Trustees meeting – Wed. April 13, 2016 at 7 pm (Brooks Free Library)
 - B. Annual and Special Town Meeting – May 2 and 3, 2016
 - C. Mass. Library Assn Conference – May 16-18 Hyannis (Brooks Free Library presents workshop on instructional programs for assistive technology – May 16 at 2:45pm)
10. Adjournment

Authorized posting officer

Virginia Hewitt

Brooks Free Library

Posted by

Town Clerk's Office

Agenda submitted electronically to Town of Harwich for posting

If you are deaf or hard of hearing or are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, contact the Library at 508-430-7562 or brooksfreelibrary@clamsnet.org.

Minutes
Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Wednesday February 10, 2016
Thornton Room, Brooks Free Library
739 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645

Draft

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mary Warde at 7.03 P. M. Present were Mary Warde, Ann Emerson, JoAnne Brown, Kathleen Remillard, Jeannie Wheeler and Library Director Virginia Hewitt. Absent: William Crowell and Joan McCarty

Approval of Minutes: Jeannie Wheeler made a motion to accept the January 13, 2016 minutes with one correction as follows: strike out JoAnne and insert "Jeannie Wheeler is still waiting to hear from W.B. Mason regarding furniture for the Doane Room." JoAnne Brown seconded. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Public Comment: None

Reports:

Chairman: Mary reported that William Crowell took out his nomination papers. Ann Emerson indicated she will also take out nomination papers.

Library Director: See Report

- Lisa Eagar was rehired as a part-time Circulation Assistant.

Building and Grounds Committee:

- Jeannie Wheeler thanked for Ginny her hard work regarding the historic preservation of the library's exterior.
- The next meeting with the CPC will be February 11, 2016 @ 7:00 P.M. at Town Hall.
- Ginny passed around letters from the Mass Historical Commission stating they had reviewed McKinley Kalsow's assessment and recommendations to preserve the exterior and a letter from the Historic District and Historical Commission regarding their unanimous support for funding the exterior preservation work.
- We are scheduled to meet with the Community Preservation Committee on Feb. 11 to request they reconsider their vote and provide funding for the exterior preservation project.
- Jeannie reported that eight stools will be picked up and covered.
- Also waiting for a corrected purchase order for the furniture.

Correspondence: None

Old Business:

- Ginny will e-mail the budget to the Trustees.
- Town Meeting Article has been submitted.
- Ginny handed out proposed qualification for the Assistant Library Director position.

Donations: None

Trustees' Report: None

Upcoming Meetings:

- Community Preservation Committee-February 11, 2016 @ 7:00 P.M. @ Town Hall.
- Trustees Budget Hearing with Selectmen and Finance Committee-February 27, 2016 @ 4:15 P.M. @ Community Center.
- Next Trustees meeting-March 9, 2016 @ 7:00 P.M. at Brooks Free Library.

Adjournment: JoAnne Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ann Emerson seconded. The motion carried by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Remillard, Secretary
Trustee Brooks Free Library

Library Director's Report
March 2, 2016

Personnel:

I will be out for just over two weeks on medical leave from March 17 through April 2nd.

Mass. Library Association Annual Conference

The MLA conference is returning to Cape Cod this year. It'll be held May 16-18 at the Resort and Conference Center in Hyannis. More details will be coming out soon, but an outline of the schedule is included in your packets. Several of our staff members – Assistive Technology Coordinator Carla Burke, Senior Library Technician Joanne Clingan, Assistant Director Emily Milan and I – are presenting a workshop on creating an instructional program to teach people with vision loss to use assistive technology. Often libraries make this technology available but because community members with sight loss don't know how to use it, it doesn't get used. The workshop title is "Providing Assistive Technology Is Not Enough" and it's scheduled for Monday, May 16 at 2:45 pm.

COSTEP Massachusetts

I'll miss the quarterly meeting of COSTEP Mass. on March 18 because of my leave, but Assistant Director Emily Milan will attend. The main presentation will be on "The 60 Minute Disaster Plan," a guided approach to creating a disaster plan in manageable steps, which should be very useful for our own purposes as well as working with local cultural and historical organizations.

Funding for the Preservation Work on the Exterior

Wendall Kalsow from McGinley Kalsow associates joined us when we met with the Community Preservation Committee on Feb. 11. We reported on the Historic District Historical Commission's unanimous support of our project and provided CPC with the Feb. 10 2016 letter (copy attached) from the Massachusetts Historical Commission stating that they had reviewed McGinley Kalsow's assessment and that they concurred with the recommendations. The letter also states the recommendations are in compliance with the US Dept. of the Interior's standards for historic preservation. The CPC voted to re-consider the project and then voted to approve the \$540,000 in new funds. Combined with the \$38,656 remaining in previously approved CPC funds, the architects have estimated this should be sufficient to complete the work on the exterior itself. Funding for work on the sidewalk repairs and streetscape improvement recommendations has been included on the Capital Plan for FY18.

Commonwealth eBook Steering Committee:

As one of the first consortiums to agree to participate in the Commonwealth eBook Collection, CLAMS has a seat on the steering committee. Assuming she is confirmed by the CLAMS Board of Directors at their meeting next week, Reference Librarian Jennifer Pickett will begin serving on the Steering Committee.

FY16 Expenditures:

The spreadsheet of year-to-date expenditures through February 29th is included in your packet.

FY17 Budget Request:

We met with the Selectmen and Finance Committee on Feb. 27th at their joint budget hearings. We may be scheduled to meet with each board separately when they discuss CPC articles.

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia A. Hewitt
Library Director

FY16 Budget Balances
2.29.2016

AREA OF EXPENDITURE	Appropriated Amt	Spent	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
Advertising	\$160.00	\$52.00	\$108.00	33%
Dues, Subs & Travel	\$2,625.00	\$965.35	\$1,659.65	37%
Electric	\$32,795.00	\$18,853.91	\$13,941.09	57%
Maintenance & Repair	\$56,382.00	\$34,909.97	\$21,472.03	62%
Library Supplies	\$13,250.00	\$3,677.20	\$9,572.80	28%
Educational Supplies	\$140,867.00	\$87,131.48	\$53,735.52	62%
Gas	\$17,076.00	\$4,561.11	\$12,514.89	27%
Office Supplies	\$4,300.00	\$4,073.07	\$226.93	95%
Professional & Tech	\$43,313.00	\$39,045.17	\$4,267.83	90%
Water	\$950.00	\$394.90	\$555.10	42%
Other Fringe Benefits	\$625.00	\$125.00	\$500.00	20%
Total Library Expenses	\$312,343.00	\$193,789.16	\$118,553.84	62%
Wages & Salaries	\$574,544.69	\$347,151.15	\$227,393.54	60%
TOTAL	\$886,887.69	\$540,940.31	\$345,947.38	61%

VITAL Report March 9, 2016

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind Intern

Erin Milde completed her Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) internship in the VITAL program on November 19, 2015. Erin is currently a volunteer at her hometown library, the Brewster Ladies Library, developing a Talking Book collection. She volunteers at the Brooks Free Library on Tuesdays as a VITAL volunteer instructor. Erin also downloads books from the National Library Service's Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website for patrons here at Brooks.

VITAL Instruction

- Two patrons are receiving instruction on iDevices using Apple's VoiceOver screen reader. The VITAL program is receiving a growing number of requests for instruction on iOS devices, using both VoiceOver and Apple's Zoom magnification option. Currently three patrons are on the waiting list for such instruction. Along with assistance from Erin Milde, I have developed a curriculum to teach the accessibility options available on iOS devices. This curriculum will need to be updated each time Apple updates its' mobile operating system.
- One patron is learning the JAWS screen reading program in order to become a VITAL volunteer instructor.
- Senior Library Technician Joanne Clingan is scheduled to teach a prospective volunteer instructor how to download books from the National Library Service's Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website.

Aids and Appliances for the Visually Impaired Program

On October 22, 2015 Carolyn Ovesen, Rehabilitation Teaching Supervisor from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, demonstrated aids and appliances that can be used by people with vision loss to promote independent living skills. This program was originally scheduled to be held in the Thornton Room at the library, but was moved to the Griffin Room at Harwich Town Hall because the library was closed on that day due to electrical issues. Seventeen patrons attended the program, a number of whom have since requested VITAL services. I would like to acknowledge VITAL volunteers Erin Milde, Mary Brooks, Pat O'Connell, Maryjane Whitehead, Frances McLaughlin, and Joanna McInerney, as well as Senior Library Technician Joanne Clingan for their assistance during the program. I would also like to recognize Custodian Trish Centrella for her assistance prior to and after the program.

Chatham-Nauset Lions Meeting

On Wednesday, April 6 I am scheduled to provide an update on the VITAL program to the Chatham-Nauset Lions Club. Assistant Director Emily Milan will accompany me to the Club's dinner meeting. In addition to the update, I will recognize Lion Mike Livingston for his ten years of service as a VITAL volunteer instructor. Mike is leaving the VITAL program to pursue other interests. He has graciously offered to train a volunteer to take his place as a ZoomText instructor.

Sight Loss Services Speaking Engagements

On November 10, 2015 I spoke to a Sight Loss Services support group at the Unitarian Church of Barnstable. The following month on December 15 I spoke to the Sight Loss Services support group that meets at Mayflower Place in Yarmouth. My talks included information about the library's VITAL program and other resources available to people with sight loss. VITAL volunteer Maryjane Whitehead assisted at these presentations. Additional talks to four more Sight Loss

Services support groups are planned for fall 2016. Sight Loss Services, Inc. is a nonprofit agency located in Dennis. This agency provides support services to Cape Cod and Island residents with sight loss.

Vision Workshop

On April 17 I will be speaking at a Vision Workshop to be held at Holy Trinity Church in Harwich. I will be providing an overview of the instruction and other services available through our VITAL program. I will also be distributing our VITAL brochure and other materials taken from our VITAL resource shelves.

Brooks/Perkins Handbook Collaboration

The Brooks Free Library, Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library, and Perkins Solutions have collaborated on a resource handbook that will be distributed to every municipal library in Massachusetts. (Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library and Perkins Solutions are subsidiaries of the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts.) Our library's contribution to the handbook consists of a guide for libraries wishing to establish a program similar to our VITAL program. In addition to the guidelines I wrote, Senior Library Technician Joanne Clingan wrote a section titled "The role of Library Staff" that is included in the document. Our portion of the handbook has been forwarded to Perkins for submission to the copy editor chosen for the project. A publication date has not yet been set.

Bay State Council of the Blind Award

I have been chosen by the Bay State council of the Blind (BSCB) to receive its' 2016 Outstanding Service Award. BSCB is the Massachusetts affiliate of the American council of the Blind (ACB). As stated on the ACB website, "The American Council of the Blind strives to increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity, and quality of life, for all blind and visually-impaired people". This award brings with it statewide recognition of our VITAL program.

Respectfully submitted,
Carla Burke
Assistive Technology Coordinator

Assistant Director's Report
March 1, 2015

Staffing:

This month I was happy to welcome back Circulation Assistant Lisa Eager. Lisa will once again be available to substitute during the evenings. Her reader's advisory skills and knowledge of the Sierra system make her a tremendous asset to the library and the entire staff was thrilled to welcome her back.

Circulation:

I am in the process of writing and revising several circulation procedures in order to eliminate the potential for inconsistencies. In the process of doing so, I requested input from permanent staff members and will be incorporating their suggestions before distributing the final product sometime this month.

Fine Amnesty

As previously reported, we are moving our annual Fine Amnesty from December to March. There are many other food drives around the holidays so this will allow the Family Pantry to restock their shelves at a time of year when large donations are not as common.

Technology:

In February, CLAMS notified staff members of an impending change to the layout and features of our online catalog. They were unable to give us a live product to explore prior to making the changes public but did release a print version of some screen shots which I distributed to staff members. Most of the changes simplified the search process and both staff and the public have been pleased with the outcome.

This month I was able to fully implement the new print vending system that utilizes a print release station (desktop computer), now located near the 30 minute public computers, to print from the public computers to the 2nd floor copier. Although patrons no longer receive three free copies they can now print in color as well as black and white. Both the software package and the copier were supplied by Kenmark at no expense to the library. However, we did repurpose an older desktop computer to act as the print release station itself. This new system has wireless printing capabilities that we will implement once staff and patrons have become accustomed to the change. I plan on having the wireless function fully operational prior to the summer rush.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Milan
Acting Assistant Director

Youth Services Report
03/01/16

February Vacation Week

February vacation programming was a success, with over 300 people attending the events during the school vacation week. Highlights of the programs included a magic show, an engineering challenge, making slime, and a variety of special crafts.

Changes in Online Registration for Summer Reading Program

After years of MLS paying for an online summer reading program, the system we have been using for years has been discontinued. A limited number of libraries are being given access to a new program. We were fortunate to be one of the winners of the lottery, but after Emily and I reviewed the program we determined that it would not be a good fit for the volume of students we see in our library over the summer. I am investigating other online tracking programs that we may wish to purchase.

Collaboration with Harwich Elementary School

After Senior Library Technician Carey Sims' success at the Title One Literacy event last month, we have been asked to present at the Title One Mathematics program in March. I will be talking about and demonstrating card and board games that promote mathematical skills or logical reasoning.

Middle School Makers STEM Project

Our Middle School Maker program was introduced to the idea of cloud printing, and challenged with starting to think of ideas for how to design a machine that will mimic the commercial products. This was an initial brainstorm/get excited meeting. We will devote all of the Middle School Maker meetings in the month of April to creating our product and hope to present it at the Maker Faire in Mashpee at the end of April.

Special Programs This Month:

On Saturday, March 12, the "Mad Science" team will be here. They bring an enthusiastic and charismatic program to school-aged children about the wonders of science. Their Up, Up, and Away program features a "hoverboard" they create in front of the audience!

This month's Engineering Challenge will take place on Saturday, March 26 (2 pm.) Students and families will be challenged to build a "sailboat" that will speed along our racecourse using the power of our industrial fan.

Little Hands Arts continues on Saturday mornings for the month of March. This is an art exploration class that emphasizes the creative process over producing a standard result.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carpenter
Youth Services Librarian

Reference Librarian's Report to the Trustees
March 2, 2016

Taxes and Printing

The Reference desk has been busy these past few weeks as we are helping people with tax forms and the new print vending system/photocopier. The IRS supplied us with more forms this year than last year so I am happy about that, but I am always surprised by the large number of people that come in each year looking for the paper tax forms. It's clear that we still have a large number of folks in our community that either do not have internet access or lack the basic skills to be able to print out a form on their own.

We received our new photocopier from KenMark in early February and once we figured out the basic functions we were all very pleased. New functions include: making color copies for 40 cents, making double-sided copies, and being able to feed a small stack of originals into the machine all at once. The machine also takes one dollar bills as well as coins. Emily Milan, Assistant Director, spent significant time working with our vendors to then set up the print vending function which went live several weeks ago. This one machine is now doing double duty as a copier and as a printer. Once the system was operational, Emily and I thought of several changes that should be made with how the system worked and Emily was able to work with the vendor to get our suggestions implemented. This new system is completely different from how things worked before so our patrons have a bit of a learning curve to overcome, but so far it has gone very smoothly. We are using significantly less paper each day and there is much less waste is created. We now have one machine to 'take care of instead' of three. If anyone wants a quick demo of the new system, just come up to the Reference desk. I am usually working 9-4, Tues- Saturday and I would be happy to show you how the new system is improving our workflow and saving us money.

CLAMS Policies

This past month, I was very happy when the CLAMS membership board approved a policy that I had brought forth that now requires the records of paid fines to be deleted from the Sierra automated system after one year. These records show the amount of the fine paid along with the item associated with the fine. I had noticed that many patrons had records of paid fines on their accounts going back more than 5 years, so the system had in effect been retaining records of items they had checked out and returned years ago. I also advocated for the purging of the notes in patron records that indicated fines that were waived on the old DRA system – these were fines that had been waived more than 10 years ago and I didn't think it was right that we were retaining that information for such a long time period. In doing a bit of legal research on these issues I uncovered some other issues with old patron data that CLAMS might want to deal with differently and I hope to bring these suggestions up soon.

Commonwealth Ebook Collection Steering Committee

After being asked, I agreed to be the new CLAMS representative to the Commonwealth Ebook Collection Steering Committee. I will be officially voted in by the CLAMS board soon and will attend the next meeting of the committee on March 15. In this role I will be the only representative on this state-wide committee from the CLAMS network and I will get a chance to have some input into the future of the program. I hope to bring my unique perspective to this committee as someone who is out on the front lines actually helping patrons directly with this resource whereas the rest of the board may be made up of mostly directors and administrators.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Pickett
Reference Librarian

Trustees Report
Staff Librarian/Technical Services
March 2, 2016

Commonwealth Catalog: The number of items being requested and sent out in the Commonwealth Catalog has been going down for the past three months. In December our patrons requested 281 items, 112 in January and 65 in February (8 were in process at the end of the month). This drop could simply be the number of our patrons who go south for the winter. We supplied 70 items in December 2015, 31 in January and 19 in February to patrons outside of the CLAMS system with an average fill rate of 77%. Many of the items that we are unable to provide are ones that are checked out to other patrons in our system or they have long hold lists.

Programming: Our winter programming was in full swing after the beginning of the year and attendance has been steady.

Program	January	February
Evening Book Group	11	13
Morning Book Group	3	3
Literary Diners	5	9
Evening Writer's group	5 (new)	8
Coloring Group	15 (new)	4
Card Games	5 (new)	5
Board Games	12 (new)	14

In January, the Friends of Brooks Free Library had 100 attendees for Joan Anderson's talk about her upcoming movie and the Worn Out Jug Band had 53 in February. Knit Lit and the Greatest Generation Book Group also have consistent attendance but I do not have the numbers at this time. Doug Karlson talked to a group of 18 about his new novel and self-publishing a book. Local artist, Heather Blume had 11 individuals attend a blank Journal-making Workshop in late February.

The new Evening Writers Group started by Senior Library Technician Jack Sheedy in Jan. has been extremely popular and responds to a demand for this type of program. Our Morning Writers Group has been full for many years. Originally scheduled for one night per month, we are looking at revising our schedule of evening programs so we can accommodate the group's request to meet two evenings per month.

We are also getting enthusiastic groups attending the evening board games, card games and coloring programs that we're offering this winter.

We're planning a 6-week writing series led by Circulation Assistant Corey Farrenkopf, to begin in April.

As outreach, I have arranged with Melanie Bach at Pine Oaks to attend one of her Coffee Connections each month to provide a craft for residents and talk with them about programming and services that the library provides. In January, I went to Phase 1 and had 7 individuals make tile coasters. At Phase 3, I helped 9 residents to do the craft as well as provided them with coloring pages from our collection used in our program here. I will continue to alternate months in April and May, break for the summer, and hope to continue in the fall.

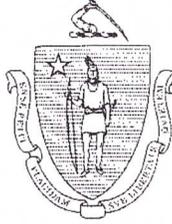
Two upcoming "First Sunday" programs provided by the Friends of Brooks Free Library are "Clutter Control" with David Downs on March 6 at 2 pm and Stephen Collins: Dramatic Readings of Shakespeare on April 3 at 2 pm.

Library-sponsored special programs for adults in March include a Collage Workshop on Sat. March 5 at 2 pm, local author Ingrid Stabins speaking on "Life in Germany During World War II" on Sat. March 19 at 2 pm and Postage Stamp Collecting on Sat. March 26 at 2pm.

The full program schedule is available on flyers at the Library and several community locations and on our website at www.brooksfreelibrary.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Martell



February 10, 2016

Virginia Hewitt,
Library Director
Brooks Free Library
739 Main Street
Harwich, MA 02645

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

RE: Brooks Free Library, 739 Main Street, Harwich, MA

Dear Ms. Hewitt:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) was provided with a copy of the Brooks Free Library Exterior Assessment Report, prepared by McGinley Kalsow & Associates, Inc and dated July 17, 2015. The report addresses the assessment of the Brooks Block building relative to the building's condition, prioritized repair recommendations and budget pricing reflecting the recommended repairs. McGinley Kalsow & Associates has requested that the MHC review and comment on this report.

The Brooks Free Library is included in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Harwich Center Historic District. The MHC recommends that all proposed work on historic buildings follow the *Secretary of the Interior's, Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. It is the intent of these standards to assist with the long-term preservation of an historic property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features.

After reviewing the Brooks Free Library Report, relative to the architectural assessment, the MHC understands the proposed recommendations include the following: repairs to the existing windows; miscellaneous repairs and selective replacement to all wood clapboard and trim including wood columns and flashings; chemical stripping of paint to an approximate 90% removal level; and priming and painting. The MHC would agree that the recommended approach will follow the *Secretary of the Interior's, Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* by maximizing the retention of historic building fabric. The use of chemical stripping is a recognized and acceptable method for paint removal, particularly useful when existing paint layer buildup has reached an extreme condition as would appear to be the case with the Brooks Block building. The MHC is familiar with this method and has provided funding for projects involving this type of paint removal approach including the Edmund Fowle House located in Watertown, MA.

The MHC would strongly recommend that historic paint color analysis be undertaken prior to the paint stripping as this paint removal method permanently eliminates any possibility for analysis of paint color evidence in the future. In conjunction with the analysis of the historic paint color layers, the MHC would also recommend the implementation of the original or other historically appropriate paint color scheme as determined through this process.

In conclusion, the MHC has reviewed the referenced report and agrees with the design approach taken which minimizes changes to the important character-defining features of the library and emphasizes the stabilization and restoration of key original features and qualities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Holtz".

Paul Holtz
Historical Architect
Co-Director, Grants Division
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Cc: Wendall Kalsow, McGinley Kalsow & Associates

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By Doug Karlson

Print Page

February 26, 2016 2:01AM

Libraries 2.0: Music, art, culture, and books, too

Look at the crowded parking lots and you'll see. Libraries, particularly those on Cape Cod, are flourishing.

That might surprise some people, given that you can research anything on Google, and order up e-books at Amazon. So why are these seemingly anachronistic athenaeums doing so well? The answer, say librarians, is because (in addition to having books) they have become centers of culture and community. They offer free programs where people can connect.

"We don't have front porches [on our houses] anymore, people don't get to meet their neighbors," explained Ginny Hewitt, director of Harwich's Brooks Free Library. But they can meet people at the library.

Brooks Free Library's long-range plan in 2004 emphasized what the American Library Association called the "Library as Commons." That movement, explained Hewitt, is about people using libraries to build connections.

"It's really taken off on the Cape," Hewitt said, "primarily because many people retire here without roots in the community." They are therefore looking to meet other people. Those retired people also have the leisure time to investigate their interests.

"Providing the meeting space for people to connect is really very important for a library to offer," agreed Kathy Cockroft, director of the Brewster Ladies' Library.

The library provides the venue and the publicity for event, and helps connect people, she said.

Brooks offers between 900 and 1,000 programs per year, ranging from one-on-one computer tutoring to concerts attended by 100 people. Popular programs include a card game group, several writers' groups, scrapbooking and mahjong.

Also popular is The Greatest Generation, a group for veterans and people interested in World War 2. "It's an underserved group for people who don't normally get a chance to talk together."

Knit Lit, a knitting group, is also a favorite. "You can't get a parking spot, it's so popular," said Hewitt.

Brewster Ladies Library has historically offered extra programs, like a documentary film series, poetry readings, and arts and crafts. Its large conference room is often put to use for live music performances, and each month displays a new art exhibit.

At Snow Library in Orleans, patrons can enjoy its Lifelong Learning Series, hear jazz concerts and participate in English conversation classes for non-native speakers. "Twenty years ago we were not doing any kinds of programming like this," noted Tavi Prugn, library director.

"We're interested in getting everyone in, from children to seniors," said Prugn.

"We're giving people what they want. We're helping people to be fulfilled."

"Community members are coming to the library and asking to start programs. That's how the knitting program started," added Brewster's Cockroft.

When Hewitt began as Brooks Free Library director, in 2000, she said the emphasis was on educational programs running six to eight weeks -- subjects like, say, the history of China. But instructors found that these courses were not as popular as programs that followed a more "commons" approach, such as jazz appreciation, which anyone could simply drop into.

At lectures or concerts you don't meet people as easily as you do at a knitting group or book club, for instance, explained Hewitt, and people like programs where they can interact with others.

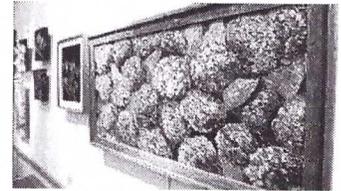
Totally quiet libraries are stagnating, observed Hewitt. Sure, if you talk in the reading room you'll still get hushed, but there's plenty of other rooms for lectures, music and other events. "Libraries aren't quiet places the used to be. People are looking to interact," said Hewitt.

The most popular programs are educational workshops, said Cockroft, like the genealogy workshops and poetry workshops. The Ladies library has also offered iPhone photography workshops, and technology classes -- like how to work the iPad.

At Snow Library, Lifetime Learning Adult Education draws large crowds, and the library has hosted lectures on understanding the Middle East, the 2016 election, and Early English literature. "They really run the gamut," said Prugn.

Music is very popular as well. At Snow Library, the Rowena Myers Music Series, funded by a trust, offers Saturday concerts ranging from Bart Weisman's jazz quintet to the Chandler Travis Three-O.

The Brewster Ladies' Library also offers the Frances Mapes Nickerson Memorial Lecture Series, now in its fourth year, which is funded by a gift from the late



Music performances, expert lecturers and art exhibits are among the regular offerings at Cape libraries. Pictured, artist Stephen Roth's paintings on display recently at Brewster Ladies Library, which hosts an exhibit by a different artist or group of artists every month. STAFF PHOTOS BY DAVID COLANTUONO

Mrs. Nickerson. Speakers have included historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, inventor and author William Kamkwamba, and journalist Laura Ling.

This summer author Michael Tougias (“The Finest Hours”), will speak, as will Susan Branch, author of “A Fine Romance: Falling in Love with the English Countryside.”

In addition, Cockroft reported that typically more than 100 people attend the Brewster Ladies’ Library’s Sunday afternoon music performances.

“Libraries are always cognizant of the fact that we want to stay relevant,” said Cockroft.

Libraries have also reached out to people who are hearing and sight impaired, and involve them in the library community with technology that allows them to access books and periodicals. Brooks Free Library, for example, has a well-established program to teach those who can’t see how to use special technology and computers. “That makes a huge difference if they’re feeling isolated,” said Hewitt.

That sense of community extends to children as well. Brooks extended its hours so middle school students have a safe place to go after school – a big help to parents who work.

At Snow Library in Orleans, children’s programming has increased greatly over the years. The library hosts a homework program, and special programs for the school holidays, like Minecraft Coding Program, which teaches computer coding. Once a month the library offers a Saturday game day where board games are played, as well as Move and Groove, a dance class where children and adults exercise to music.

“We want to be offering more than just books,” said Prugn, but he quickly notes that books are still the most important.