

FARMINGTON LIBRARIES
Since 1901

Jay Johnston M.S., M.A.
Executive Director

“The only thing that you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library.”

— *Albert Einstein*

September 1, 2014

Dear Trustee:

Overview

In 2010, I reported: *“during these extraordinary times, innovative library service continues to emerge and flourish in Farmington”*. I am happy to report that we continue to invigorate this vision with demographic data revealing a new landscape. This awareness of different expectations has come about through our relationships with our customers and their candid feedback, and we are assessing the needs of our ever-changing community to determine how the library can best serve the many demands from our population. Indeed, we have received feedback and have responded to criticism with viable solutions. The positive affect of this “service beyond expectations” driven attitude has validated our work in positive responses reported in the long-range plan customer survey. Indeed, all of these past actions and responses have guided our chosen FY-15 strategic course about which we are emphatically enthusiastic. To that end, we are looking towards operationalizing exciting and important structural enhancements to our program while always keeping our eyes on the primary goal: to be the community’s living room and agora and particularly a labor-intensive, people-centered, friendly organization structured to provide customer satisfaction beyond expectations through competence, intelligence and kindness.

Position

It is without hesitation that I assert our position remains as the premier community asset. However, affection can be fleeting and we must be actively vigilant and perceptive to the needs and wants of our dynamic community. In that regard, we have developed within our long-range plan a concept of **Creative Commons** or **Maker Space** to accommodate these dynamics. In addition, we have positioned the libraries in the performing arts with an outstanding and well attended music series, intellectual adult learning series, new, in development, fine arts Gallery Program, a rich new array of responsive adult programming while, outstanding children’s programming continues to respond to the ever-changing dynamics of pre-K and curricular enhancements, branch services continue to expand and change with new technologies and learning opportunities.

Technology

Technology remains an essential element of the libraries landscape where we are continually looking ahead of the curve, while waiting for proven hardware and software to emerge successfully. Bring your own device (BYOD) technology is essential to the library's model and we have responded with new routers and switches to increase the speed and access of our business and other users. We have also revitalized our PC node maintenance and placement schedule to better-fit staff and customer needs. And we are testing radiofrequency identification, **RFID**, in Lending Services. Training is important and we have increased the emphasis on in-house and external learning as a key component to our successes. Our acquisition of a 3-D printer and scanner, and computer-aided design software are principal learning curves we will need to develop over the next several months to accommodate new programming.

Philosophy

I reported in 2010, "we have refocused and adjusted our direction toward the delivery of qualitative service units. Users experience and customer service outcomes are weighted more heavily than visitation/lending metrics. This approach is based in the total experience model, where a great deal more time and resources are required to assist customers than in the past, due to the complexity of questions and assistance required." In that regard, I believe our approach to service is validated by the libraries' exceptional overall lending rate that is two times Connecticut's average. Based upon the above we stand firmly on qualitative service as our core philosophy.

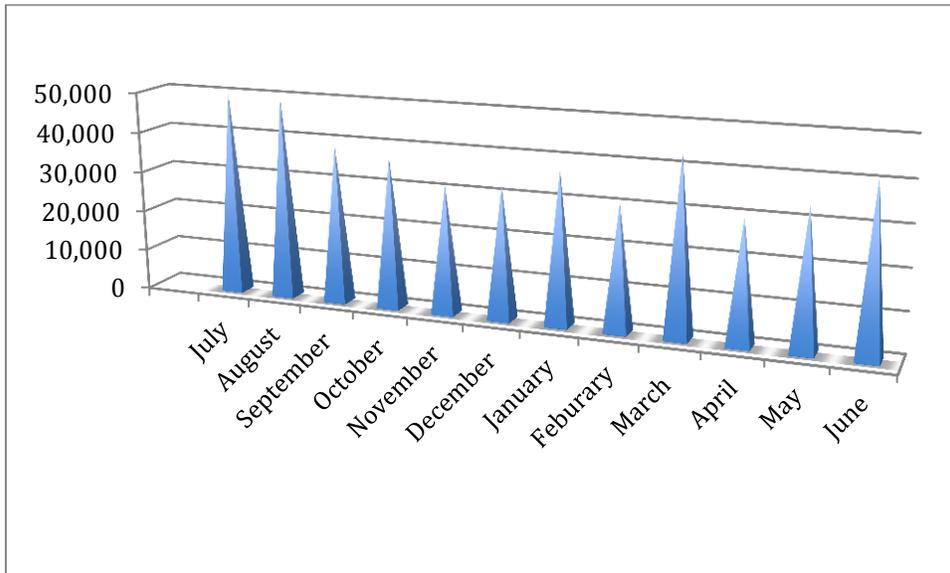
Organization

Our operational model continues to develop in response to our internal and external environments; principally, significant leadership changes in Branch, Children, Lending, Collection Management in addition to Information Services, have resulted in significant reengineering as we develop more facile and structured responses to operational requirements. Collection management has significant structural changes while lending services have focused upon workflows and software development issues resolution. **RFID** is undergoing beta-test to increase customer satisfaction for special segments experiencing processing delays.

In summation, I will attest to our continuous review and effort to create the best possible environment and program for our citizens. I believe this team effort with our directors and staff has resulted in one of Connecticut's finest libraries. We touch each Farmington citizen almost 30 times per year. I believe you will be amazed by the following FY 2013-2014 report.

Sincerely,

J. Johnston



The Chart shows the incremental lending rate through FY-14 at 423,632 loans. The above data does not include the 283,726 additional service interactions delivered throughout the year. It also not indicates service delivery time, a metric we may find instructive in future reports.

FY 14 Major Accomplishments

- Increased Passport services
- Energy conservation
- Barney Library staff reorganization, grounds refurbishing and building HVAC systems upgrade
- Revised Emergency Procedures
- Technology enhancement, upgrades and repositioning
- Creative Commons development
- Revenue enhancements development.
- Major Programming enhancements
- Acquisitions Reengineering

Interesting Facts

- 99,865 visits to the website
- 153 teen programs, with attendance total of 1,170 teens
- 207 adult programs, with attendance of 3,901
- Volunteers gave 768 hours of their time to the Libraries
- 251 hours the information department spent providing individual technology instruction to patrons

- 1075 programs with an attendance of 22,513
- Main Library 855 programs for an attendance of 18,555
- Barney Library 220 programs with an attendance of 3,958 average program

TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Emerging Technologies/Community Services
Jessica Smith, Director

Continued to develop social media outreach using tools such as Facebook and Twitter. From July 2013 to June 2014, the number of followers on Facebook increased from 368 to 472 and the number of Twitter followers jumped from 270 to 386. The constant posting of content continues to generate new followers.

2013-2014 saw the start of the Richard P. Garmany Music Series, made possible by a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Between June 2013 and May 2014, the Farmington Libraries hosted 20 music programs that attracted 1,721 concertgoers. To try to appeal to the widest audience possible, we staggered these programs on different days and times at both the Main and Barney Libraries . . . such as winter Sunday afternoons, summer lawn concerts in the early evenings, weekday evenings, and weekday afternoons throughout the year. The concerts ranged from jazz and swing, to classical and baroque, to the great American songbook and to musical plays for children. When not a capela, vocalists were accompanied by accomplished musicians, and the instruments ranged from guitar and mandolin, to piano and organ, and to violin, drums, and assorted woodwind and brass horns. We worked diligently to offer something that would appeal to every kind of music lover!

Through attentive planning and thoughtful stewardship of this grant opportunity the Farmington Libraries were able to stretch the grant to cover a two-year period. In May 2015, that two-year period will end, and we are investigating fundraising opportunities to continue to sustain this program.

We also saw an increase in the number of adult programs at the main library in 2013-2014. There was a continued commitment to the Director's College, with 172 people attending 9 scholarly programs. This past year, we partnered with the outreach efforts of the Mark Twain House and Museum and the Florence Griswold Museum to bring insight from those resources into the Farmington community. In 2013-2014, we also continued our relationship with the Lewis Walpole Library, working in concert to plan an exhibition lecture and private viewing each semester for the community.

Our annual Kristallnacht program in November again drew over 100 people to hear Dr. Leon Chameides talk about how his childhood was spent in fear of the Nazis and

in hiding at a monastery. Other notable programs included a staged play based on the book, "Having Their Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years," by Emily Mann, adapted from the book, "Having Our Say," by Sarah L. Delany and A. Elizabeth Delany, a Hitchcock film series, a popular professor-led classic book group that met five times in total in the fall and spring, a photo organizing workshop, an author talk and book signing with a local medium, a series of write-ins for National Novel Writing Month, and a variety of health-related topics.

Lending/Collection Management

Caroline Ford, Director

Several staff changes have led to new systems and ideas in Lending and Collection Management. Members of both teams have been working together to provide great customer service. It's all about the patrons!

In an effort to better communicate between Lending Services, Collection Management and the Barney Library, "Meeting in a Memo" has been created to ensure that all members of the departments receive the same information in the same timely manner. Staff members are alerted to changes, upcoming events and are reminded about customer service facts. Examples of these service facts may include a refresher on discharge procedures, recommendations on fines collection, or a prompting on timeliness.

I am happy to report on some small changes in the use of staff time and skills that have yielded big results:

- To get new books in the hands of patrons in a timelier manner several Lending Services employees have been trained to assist in nonfiction cataloging.
- A Collection Management employee has learned more about cataloging and is now processing children's nonfiction.
- Lending Services staff has taken over the upkeep of the book and audio book displays on the first floor and is also in charge of the maintenance of the Community Bulletin Board, two heavily used visual areas on the main floor.
- Staff members from both departments collaborated and created an updated Lending Policy manual.
- Several Lending Service employees have been cross trained to work in the Children's department and the Barney Library, resulting in a more flexible staff that is capable of helping in other departments when needed.

- In order to ensure patrons are checking out well cared for materials several more employees are cleaning DVDs and CDs.

Children's Department/Barney Library

Sarah Morgan, Director

Our children's program continues to evolve in response to community needs and technological change. We offered 537 programs at the Main Library, attended by 14,172 people. We also offered 19 outreach programs, attended by 2,428 children (primarily school visits for summer reading promotion).

Programs for Families on Evenings and Weekends

In the past year, we have significantly expanded our offerings on evenings and weekends to accommodate working families. We now offer programming most weeks on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings, and almost every Saturday, with a particular emphasis on programs for the whole family. These programs build community, establish the library as a cultural hub, and foster an increase in materials circulation. A highlight was "Take Your Child to the Library Day," held on the first Saturday in February. We celebrated with a performance by the Sciencetellers, a troupe of scientist/storytellers, which drew an enthusiastic audience of 120 people.

Tween Programs and Services

In October, we launched the tween space with an event featuring the Farmington Valley Mudhogs tween cheerleaders, who cheered on behalf of the library. The space has been embraced by our tween patrons and is well-used by book browsers and children working on homework. In addition to the enhanced physical space, our tween programs continue to build momentum. Over the summer, our Tuesday night tween series was a shining star of the programming lineup, with an average attendance of over twenty children per program. Children entering grades 4—6 were the most active participants in this year's summer reading program: 582 children participated, for a total of 445,673 minutes read (58% of the total for all grades, K—6).

Other Noteworthy Accomplishments

- Our children's play area was enhanced by the installation of a "treehouse"-climbing feature that has proved very popular with our youngest patrons and their families. We also installed new board book shelving for our youngest patrons, funded in part through a memorial donation.
- Library Lucy, a reading therapy dog, was introduced over the summer as a replacement for her brother Tucker, now retired.
- We continue to offer parenting classes in partnership with Bristol Hospital, including popular programs on potty training and infant/toddler sleep habits.

- In January, staff participated in the first annual “Collection Clean-Up Month” and each attacked a particular area of the collection for weeding and collection development, including identifying books in need of replacement.
- We worked to align our programs and collections with the Common Core National Standards.
- Staff increased collaboration on both program planning and execution to facilitate dynamic, large-scale programming.
- The Farmington Library Children’s Department Facebook group grew to 147 members.
- Summer Reading 2014 was extraordinarily successful, with 1,164 registrants and positive feedback from the community on our programming lineup and summer reading incentives program. Rather than count “books read,” this year’s program rewarded children for the amount of time-spent reading, and a separate incentive program encouraged children to visit the library (one ticket per visit for a grand prize drawing). Staff members and volunteers distributed 2,226 prizes.

Barney Library

The Barney Library experienced several staff changes this year. Vida Lashgari took the reins as Branch Programmer, and changes were made in the branch assistant position, the hours of which are now split between two staff members.

For children, 178 programs were offered at Barney, with attendance of 3,270. For adults, a total of 42 programs were offered, with attendance of 688. For outreach, 19 children’s programs were offered, reaching 2,428 people. Staff from the Barney Library worked in close collaboration with staff from both adult programming and children’s programming to ensure a complementary offering of programs.

Programs and services at the Barney Library continue to emphasize high-quality customer service to the neighborhood base, but traditional services have been enhanced by the addition of the iPads and other technology. This year, the iPads were used for adult programming (the very successful iPad Club) as well as innovative programming for preschoolers and school-aged children. The Barney Library also offered some Maker-style programming (Little Bits, iPad Claymation) and began a new partnership with the Noah Wallace School and their new MakerSpace.

Several groups of high school students used the library as a backdrop for their prom photos, generating great publicity.

The art shows in the gallery continue to draw a strong audience. Of particular note were a show by local artist Judy Westcott and a show of work by young artists from Noah Wallace School, which was highlighted in an after-hours reception that drew a large crowd.

Adult and Teen Services

Laura Horn, Director

Adult & Teen Services Accomplishments FY 2013-2014

What will the library of the future look like? Librarians are always asking each other this, but what we should really be doing is asking our communities, How are we doing? What do you need? If you could create the library of your dreams what would it look like? This is precisely what we did this year with our anonymous Internet based survey. We wanted to know how people were using the library, how informed they were about what the library offered, how satisfied they were with our offerings and what else they would like to see from us.

Our Survey Findings –

People want more! More of everything and they want it as soon as possible. With the advent of Google, iTunes and Amazon, people are growing ever more accustomed to getting what they want when they want it. This means that not only do we need to buy more of the popular items that patrons want, but also, that we need to offer a wider variety of access points to the content that they seek.

Patrons also want to come to the library to learn more about the technological advances that are being made today. More than half of respondents, about 52 percent, wanted to see 3D printing and more exploratory projects in electronics and technology.

We need to improve and diversify our marketing techniques. Less than 40 percent of respondents were aware that we: processed passports; offered notary public services; conducted one-on-one computer and technology classes; or had a free online video streaming service.

With this wealth of data in hand we took to making any immediate improvements that were feasible as well as drafting plans for future improvements. While we won't ever be able to compete with the likes of Amazon, Apple and Google, we can do our best to allocate funding and staff time so that emphasis is placed on the areas that are of highest importance to our community.

A look at some of the enhancements made in 2013-2014:

- Axis 360 e-book platform exclusively for Farmington Library users went live in September 2013. Allows us to offer premier e-book content with shorter wait times for our patrons.
- IndieFlix online video streaming went live in July 2013. Offers multi-user access to thousands of independent films.
- Increased funding for e-books and e-audiobooks to approximately \$10,500. Up from just a little over \$4,000 in fiscal year 2012-2013.
- Partnered with FHS art & design teacher, Earl Procko, to involve FHS students in our Maker Faire and in the planning of our new Maker Space.

- Hosted our first ever Maker Faire in February 2014 with amazing results. Hundreds from Farmington and the surrounding communities joined us to learn about 3D printing, Claymation, circuits and basic robotics and much more.
- Created a new Farmington Room Manual to outline: the purpose & scope of the Farmington Room; the room use policies and procedures; and the collection development and management procedures.
- Diligently promoted library services and events by regularly updating the slider on the homepage of the website.
- Created a library brochure to give to new library card applicants highlighting the variety of services offered at the libraries.
- Designated the bulletin board with the highest visibility in the main lobby for Farmington Library use only and created a policy for posting flyers on the community bulletin board to reduce clutter.
- Dedicated 12 e-readers for Teen use; seven Nooks and five Kindle Fires. These are loaded with current popular titles, best sellers and a wide variety of summer reading books for grades 7-12.
- Collaborated with Alysson Olsen, IAR Librarian, to create new 7th and 8th grade summer reading lists.
- Purchased a minimum of five print copies, when available, of 7th and 8th grade summer reading books as well as required FHS summer reading books. Also purchased e-books for at least one of our platforms (Axis 360, Overdrive, Nook, Kindle) for every available 7th and 8th grade summer reading book and required FHS books.
- Teen print circulation increased nearly 40 percent from 1032 in June of 2013, to 1442 in June 2014.