



Brewster Ladies' Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024



Brewster Ladies' Library Association President's Report

LISA PERKINS



It has been an incredibly productive year for the Brewster Ladies' Library and its staff. It has also been an extraordinarily busy and rewarding one for the Brewster Ladies' Library Association. During my first year as President of the Board of Directors, I have come to appreciate how important the support of the Association is—whether with words of appreciation, contributions of time, or financial gifts through memberships and donations. Our almost-standing-room-only Member Appreciation Breakfast early in May was a testimony to the love of this library and commitment to the Association.

While nearly as new to the library as I was to the presidency, our director, Brittany Taylor, worked quickly to establish relationships with those at town office and other organizations, including the Council on Aging, the Historical Society, the Brewster Book Store, and the Cultural Council; she has brought an energy and level of expertise to the library and the board that inspired us. Not only has she and her staff made the library better, she has made the Association better.

The Board has taken the concept of a “working board” to new levels with every member making a huge contribution to its goal—to carry out the mission of the library. Part of that involved reflective work: We drafted, in collaboration with Brittany and the staff, updated policies, with more work to be done, and began the discussion of how to ensure that our library is indeed a place where all are welcomed and feel safe and included. We reviewed how we should be defining our organization’s structure and operation with newly revised by-laws. We made decisions about how to best use our monetary resources: We provided more funding for Sunday concerts (and will increase funding for this popular program in FY 2025), donated 904 books to the Little Free Libraries, and provided books for students in the Food4Kids summer program. We were also able to provide more resources to the library itself in terms of increases in the book budget and staff development. In addition, we worked with Brittany and custodian, Rick Cronin, to clean out sections of the basement, installing “new” (i.e. used) shelving for book sale books and new lighting where lighting previously didn’t exist in the basement.

President's Report, Continued

While the library continued to have staff vacancies, a robust applicant pool suggested that our library was a desirable place to work. When looking for new board members, we had more interested applicants than we had openings. So our challenges were mitigated by this obvious enthusiasm for our wonderful library.

For more details on the activities of our hard-working Committees, see the individual reports that follow from our Committee Chairs.

So how do we go forward? We continue all of these efforts but also look to the health of our building. The elevator replacement process has been stalled due to the need for specialized expertise to prepare the shaft for the new elevator. We hope for our patrons and staff's sake that completion will be by the end of the year. In the wake of the town's decision in 2022 not to go forward with a major renovation, the Board devoted most of our January meeting to assess what this library building and community still needed. With significant collaboration with Brittany and her staff, we defined and prioritized what necessary repairs (those which had been delayed for the years during which we awaited the renovation) were needed and reaffirmed the goals of the original plan: to increase office and meeting space, continue to upgrade technology, and improve and create a more welcoming access to this building, especially in the lower level. Members of the board, the director, and town officials met to review these goals. The outcome thus far is that most of the major repairs articulated on that priority list have either been initiated or are in the town's 5-year capital improvement plan. Additionally, we have a commitment from the town manager, who acknowledged the need for improvements, for a limited-scope renovation. While we do NOT know the outcome of these actions, we are encouraged by the initial working relationship that has been established and are eager to go forward.

The robust growth in membership numbers is very gratifying. Not only does that provide necessary funds for the acquisition of books, periodicals, improved technology, and wonderful and well-received programming, it is evidence of the support and enthusiasm of our members. While the year brought us unanticipated challenges, it is clear that love and support of this library is at the heart of its success and the catalyst for future improvement.

Thank you.



Library Director's Report

BRITTANY TAYLOR



I am proud to present this year's Annual Director's Report, detailing the Brewster Ladies' Library's accomplishments over fiscal year 2024. When I gave my first report last year, I had only been at the Library for about four months. Now, after another 12 months, I have even more wonderful things to share. Thanks to the fantastic staff, devoted volunteers, dedicated Board of Directors and committee members, supportive community, and all of our wonderful Brewster Ladies' Library Association members, the BLL provided our patrons with a vast array of

materials and offerings, vibrant gathering spaces, extensive popular program options, and warm community connections.

Building & Grounds

The Brewster Ladies' Library building saw significant changes and progress made throughout the fiscal year 2024, despite the decision to forgo the plans for a major renovation project. The most notable of these changes revolve around the Library's technology infrastructure and capabilities. The Library transitioned to a voice-over-internet protocol (VOIP) phone system that allows for unlimited connections, while also enabling each staff member to have their own extension. Before this transition, the Library was limited to two phone lines, often leaving patrons unable to reach a staff member during busy times.

In addition, the Library received a comprehensive IT upgrade that included the clean-up of the server room and wiring within the building, the installation of new routers and switches, and new battery backups. These enhancements provide ample room for expansion, offer remote access to the network infrastructure, enable quicker troubleshooting and tech support in the future, ensure that the Library system remains viable during power outages, and it brought all of the Library's existing networks into a more manageable and secure system. Together, these improvements have brought the Library in line with modern technologies and enhanced our ability to serve the Brewster community.

Library Director's Report, Continued

The ever-generous Mary-Louise Eddy and Ruth N. Eddy Foundation provided the Library with a grant in fiscal year 2024 that allowed for the purchase and installation of three new spring-mounted book drops, which improved the ease of retrieving returned books for staff and decreased the amount of damage done to returned books due to the soft descent afforded by the depressible feature of each drop. This grant also provided funds to implement the Garden Plan designed for the Library by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod. Following this plan, Edible Landscapes of Cape Cod, a local sustainability-focused company, began planting in the Library's front and side gardens just before July 2024. Once complete, the Library's landscaping, featuring native plants, will reduce erosion and storm damage, require little maintenance, promote biodiversity, and provide a beautiful space that all BLL visitors can enjoy. Furthermore, the archival cabinet, ordered with funds from the 2022 Eddy grant, finally arrived after over a year of supply-chain-based delays. This new cabinet and the BLL archival materials it stores can be found in the Library's historic area.

In 2024, the Library also began working on two capital improvement projects. First, the Library installed five panic buttons in the building that silently notify the Brewster Police Department when pushed. This safety measure will be followed by additional security improvements in fiscal year 2025, including camera upgrades and emergency lockdown buttons. Second, the Library began construction on a larger-scale elevator replacement project in April 2024 that will significantly improve the accessibility and inclusivity of the Library, ensuring that all members of the Brewster community can enjoy our services and programs. While unforeseen conditions requiring specialized equipment temporarily halted the work during the summer, the Library hopes to complete the new elevator by mid-November 2024.

BLL Staff

The Brewster Ladies' Library again saw lots of movement within its staff in 2023/2024. After the departure of longtime Assistant Director/Youth Services Librarian Nori Morganstein, Devon Evans was promoted to Assistant Director/Adult Services & Reference Librarian in December 2023. Additionally, Michelle Benoit, former Circulation Manager, accepted her new role as the Youth Services Librarian in March 2024. Then, after a couple of months as acting Circulation Manager, former Assistant Circulation Manager, Joanne Clingan, was officially promoted to the position. Finally, the Library was pleased to add three excellent substitutes, Valerie Arroyo, Jen Bees, and Mary Baksa-Mathews, to its roster.

Library Director's Report, Continued

With the nearly constant staff shortages and staffing shifts, the BLL was grateful more than ever for its dedicated group of library substitutes. The BLL hopes to fill any remaining vacancies within the first couple of months of fiscal year 2025.

Library Services

The Brewster Ladies' Library and the rest of the CLAMS network have been using Koha, our Integrated Library System, for more than a year. While the first year of this new system was filled with trainings, troubleshooting, and adjustments, by the end of fiscal year 2024, Library staff became comfortable with Koha and benefited from the advantages of an open-sourced management service, along with the associated CLAMS Aspen catalog and a new CLAMS app.

Along with navigating the transition to Koha, the Brewster Ladies' Library staff adjusted to a slightly different schedule. The BLL added an hour to its operating hours, opening at 9 am instead of 10 am, on Wednesdays, beginning in September 2023. Not only did this bring the Library into compliance with state aid requirements, but it also allowed the Library to provide an additional, earlier hour of service to its patrons.

Other additions that improved BLL's level of service included the implementation of item pre-processing, which streamlined the process of receiving books from our main vendor to getting these items onto the shelves for our patrons; the purchase of seven new hotspots to both replace missing and/or damaged hotspots and account for the high demand for these items; and the introduction of "Lucky Day" books, or browsing copies, which are extra copies of the most popular titles that are non-requestable, non-renewable, have a shorter loan period of just one week, and can only be taken out by patrons who find these titles while browsing our new shelf, allowing Brewster patrons the opportunity for shorter wait times on the most high-demand titles.

The Library was also proud to add a Teen Confidential Corner and a "Digital Confidential Corner" to the resources available here. Like the original Confidential Corner that was established last fiscal year, these new extensions offer resources on sensitive subjects, such as addiction, mental health issues, and gender identity. The Teen Confidential Corner, as the name implies, contains young adult materials that patrons can "borrow" anonymously without being required to check them out and without any due date restrictions. The digital corner refers to a collection of online resources on the Library's website that hopes to provide easy access to local mental health and wellness organizations. From July 2023 to June 2024, 91 items were taken

Library Director's Report, Continued

from these collections. The Library hopes to continue supporting all of the community's various needs through similar initiatives.

Programming

In addition to the impressive array of 358 programs offered to all audiences, the BLL staff engaged in many collaborative and outreach initiatives that further highlighted the Library's commitment to fostering a strong sense of community and providing entertaining and informative events.

Throughout the year, Assistant Director Devon Evans and I worked with the Town of Brewster Administration and Housing Department to develop a new community reading program titled Books and Big Ideas. Inspired by a program in Kittery, Maine, Brewster's Books & Big Ideas program aims to use books to encourage and enrich discussion about the many important topics and policies affecting the Brewster community. This spring, the program launched with community members of all ages encouraged to read titles from a carefully curated selection of books that focus on housing. The program also included events such as a Housing 101 information session with Housing Director Jill Scalise, a virtual author discussion with M. Nolan Gray, an author appearance by Pat Z. Miller at the Brewster Schools (sponsored in part by the BLLA), an in-person discussion with author George Howe Colt, a discussion group on EVICTED, and a community tiny art display.

Library staff also collaborated with the Brewster Council on Aging on several programs, participated in the Eco Expo at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, attended Latham's Community Members Day, made meaningful connections at the Eddy and Stony Brook Schools, participated in the Brewster Health and Wellness Fair, and worked tirelessly with the COA and Cultural Council to organize the Town's first Juneteenth celebration. Furthermore, Devon Evans began monthly trips for "Literary Musings" to Maplewood Senior Living and introduced Outreach Tables, which allow nonprofit community organizations to be featured and have an informational table within the Library.

Conclusion

Despite the amount of both institutional and building-centered change the Library faced this past year, the Brewster Ladies' Library showed incredible resilience and strength throughout and is proud of its fiscal year 2024 accomplishments. The Library and its staff remain committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and thriving community space, and free access to a range of resources and services to further enhance the quality of life for its patrons.

The Year in Review

THE NICKERSON LECTURE

By Pat Meservey



The 9th Annual Frances Mapes Nickerson Memorial Lecture took place on October 14, 2023, featuring the esteemed author and journalist Geraldine Brooks as our guest speaker. Renowned for her immersive, character-driven historical novels, Ms. Brooks captivated us with an engaging presentation about her works, including *Horse and March*, which earned her the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2006. She also shared valuable insights into her career as a journalist and the relationship between journalism and her storytelling. Due to the threat of Hurricane Lee, the event was moved to Nauset Regional Middle School, although the storm ultimately spared the Cape. Over 500 attendees joined us for the lecture, and we received glowing feedback about the event. Organizing the Nickerson Lecture demands significant effort from our Librarian and volunteers, and we are grateful to everyone who contributed to this year's success. We eagerly anticipate the 2024 Nickerson Lecture featuring Presidential Historian Michael Beschloss this fall. While attendance is free for the public, we kindly encourage donations to support the Library.

The Year in Review

2023-2024 MEMBERSHIP

By Susan Stewart

It was another wonderful year for Membership. The committee, consisting of members Tricia Kibbe, Joan Pernice, Eileen Berquist, Nancy Mann, Regina Hayes, and Susan Stewart, as well as Cindy Kadzik, worked on increasing the awareness of the Brewster Ladies' Library Association and its importance to the success of the Brewster Ladies' Library.

We began the year with our banner proudly displayed over the back steps, announcing July as membership month and offering members free ice cream on the first day of the book sale. Many board members generously sat at the membership table to promote BLLA, sell library merchandise, and welcome people to the annual book sale. We ended our year with a thank-you breakfast at the library for 75 BLLA members.

Membership was explained and promoted at:

- Sunday Concerts
- Brewster Juneteenth celebration
- Discovery and Enrichment programs
- Various Library programs throughout the year.

Packets for Circulation were assembled by Membership with information about BLLA membership included.

BLLA membership brochures were given to the Chamber of Commerce for distribution at the town hall office and the new kiosk at the Lemon Tree shops. The May breakfast, a thank-you to members, featured the official announcement of our fall Nickerson Lecture speaker.

At the completion of the 2023-2024 year we had 681 members; currently we already have 459 members for the year, 2024-2025. Thank you again to the membership committee and the board for all their support in helping to create a strong and vital BLLA.



The Year in Review

2023 - 2024 BOOK SALE

By Mary Jo Murphy



The annual Book Sale continues to be one of the library's most anticipated events. The sale is staffed by dedicated volunteers, who logged an estimated 2,254 hours this year.

Between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, the Book Sale generated \$56,542 for the library. Of that, \$2,761 came from selling books for \$3.00.

Because of elevator repairs, the 2024 annual Book Sale took place on a different schedule, running from the last week in June through the first two weeks of July. During that time the revenue was \$22,882.46 from cash, checks and credit cards.

It is estimated that over 15,700 books, puzzles and cd's were sold. Visitors to the Book Sale area noticed improved lighting and additional shelving for an enhanced flow through the space.

We look forward to the 2025 Book Sale, when we will return to our usual schedule.

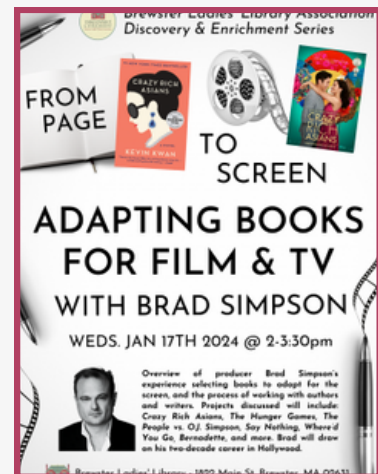
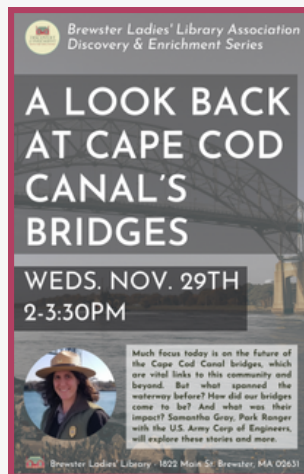
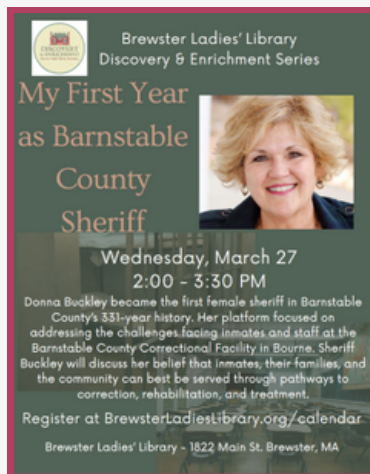
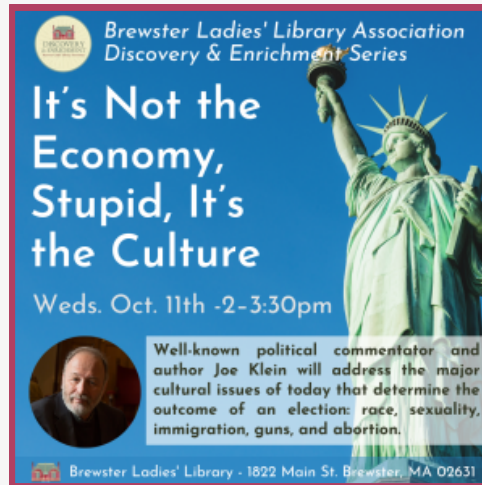
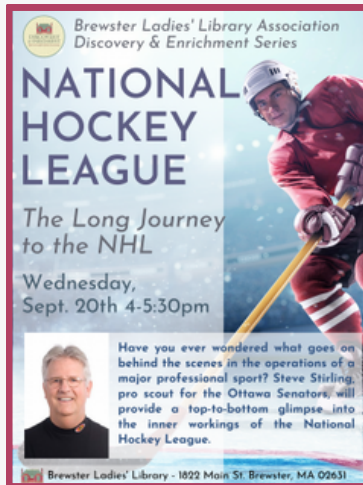


The Year in Review



2023-2024 DISCOVER & ENRICHMENT

By Pat Meservey



The Discovery & Enrichment Programming continues to attract exceptional talent to our Library. During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, D&E hosted 19 programs, engaging over 800 patrons. The topics covered were as varied as the delivery methods utilized. We kicked off the year with our now Annual Volunteer Fair, where more than 75 attendees learned about 14 non-profit volunteer opportunities in and around Brewster. Our speakers have shared insights on a range of subjects, including advancements in health care, the art of theater, Brewster's history, prison reform, environmental issues, and many more. A wonderful schedule is already underway for Fall 2024. We appreciate the numerous suggestions we receive for future programs and encourage your contributions. Please keep an eye on our monthly newsletter for updates throughout the year. While presentations are free for the public, we kindly request donations to support the Library.

The Year in Review

2023-2024 BY THE NUMBERS

FY 2023 BLLA FINANCIAL DATA

Association Revenue	\$ 261,454
Association Expenses	\$ 191,987
Town Operating Expenses	\$ 722,443
Total Library Expenses	\$ 914,430

Town Contribution	79%
Association Contribution	21%

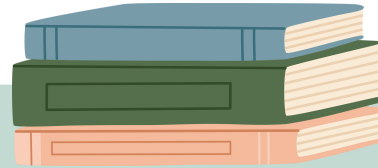
The Association budgeted to nearly break even at a \$99 net income. Revenue was 52% higher than budget due to strong income from memberships, small donations, and used book sales.

The used book sale generated \$57,000. Higher than usual due to sales in both summer, Sundays in the Winter and sales in the Spring.

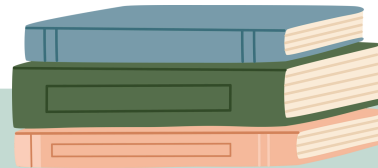
Membership and donation income was very good at \$89,956, 20% better than last year.

Not included above:

- Realized gains/losses from endowment and investment portfolio of \$116,598
- Expense for annual Nickerson lecture, \$22,020. It's funded through endowment donations from prior years.



- Library Visitors: 68,611
- New Borrowers: 713
- Newsletter Subscribers: 3,600
- Total Brewster Card Holders: 8,455 (4,792 town residents)
- Items Borrowed by Brewster Patrons: 8,202
- Holds Placed by Brewster patrons: 3,368
- Items Borrowed from CLAMS from other Networks: 81,713



- Total Physical Items Circulated: 134,177
- Overdrive Circulation: 42,028
- Adult Programs: 172
- Adult Attendance: 2,698
- Youth Programs: 152
- Youth Attendance: 4,086
- All Ages Programs: 34
- All Ages Attendance: 1,237
- Meeting Room Usage: 521

The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Cynthia Mathison named 2024 Sarah Augusta Mayo Award Winner



Named for one of the two founders of the Brewster Ladies' Library, the Sarah Augusta Mayo Award was established in 1998 to recognize outstanding service and contribution to the Library by a volunteer. To date, there have been 42 exceptional recipients and the BLLA is pleased to add a 43rd member to this illustrious group.

This year's Sarah August Mayo Award Recipient:
Cynthia Mathison

Growing up in Brockton, Cynthia has always been drawn to Cape Cod, spending summers with her family in Eastham, working at Bob's Dog House at Nauset Light Beach and later the Grist Mill. Cynthia also boasts an impressive 36-year career in banking, first with the Bank of Boston, where she worked her way up to serving as a vice president for the company, which at the time was a very uncommon position for a woman to hold, and then at Cape Cod Five, where she transitioned after marrying her husband, Kenny Walsh, and started a life on the Cape.

Volunteering at the BLL since 2012 following her retirement, Cynthia Mathison has done virtually everything there is to do at the Library throughout this time. She has served two terms on the Association Board of Directors, promoted Association membership, and organized the Boy Scouts to help decorate the Library for the holidays. She has also helped paint the Library's foundation, cleaned up flooding in the basement, hosted concerts, shelved and shifted countless books, dressed up for a Murder Mystery event, worked as a sorter and cashier at the Book Sale, and even cleared up a backed-up restroom. Along with her reliable, dedicated work, she is known for her radiant personality, her frequent mentions of her loving husband, and for always thanking the staff for the opportunity when she finishes her volunteer shift.



The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Cynthia Mathison named 2024 Sarah Augusta Mayo Award Winner, Continued

It is perhaps no surprise that Cynthia found herself drawn to the Library. Initially wanting to become a teacher, Cynthia has always had a love of books and reading. Her goddaughter, Molly, describes Cynthia as “the most well-read human” she’s ever met and that “her love of literature and the spoken word are unparalleled.”

In a volunteer spotlight article highlighting Cynthia, Board Secretary Anne Weirich asked Cynthia why she first volunteered at the Library. Cynthia replied, “Well, first of all, books don’t talk back. I figured I could get along in a place filled with books... But mostly, I’ve found that it’s a great pleasure and a kick to help people find what they’re looking for or what they didn’t even know they were looking for.” We are thankful that Cynthia’s love of books, philanthropic spirit, and cheerful, hardworking personality brought her to the Brewster Ladies’ Library. Most of all, we are grateful that the Library turned out to be just what Cynthia was looking for.

The whole Brewster Ladies’ Library wishes Cynthia the sincerest congratulations on a well-deserved honor!



The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS



The Brewster Ladies' Library Association Scholarship Program

In the fall of 2021, the BLLA board established an annual scholarship in the amount of \$2500 to be awarded to a deserving Brewster graduating senior; in 2022 the board decided to award a second scholarship in the same amount. Brewster graduating students planning to attend a two or four-year accredited college or university, or vocational/technical school of higher learning were eligible to apply. Since the spring of 2023, the committee has reached out not only to Nauset Regional High School seniors but also to those Brewster students who attended other high school programs on Cape Cod.

In addition to being a Brewster resident at the time of application, selection criteria include:

- Acknowledgement of financial need
- Grade Point Average
- Participation in extracurricular organizations
- Volunteer work
- Employment records during high school years
- Articulation of future goals and objectives

This spring, the committee, which included 4 board members (Joan Pernice, Eileen Bergquist, Susan Stewart, and Lisa Perkins) and two members from the community-at-large (Emily Degnan and Catherine Graciano), reviewed 15 strong applications-13 of which were students at NRHS, 1 from Monomoy HS, and one from Cape Cod Regional Tech. Due to their stellar academic records and overall profiles, two students from NRHS were selected by the committee and recommended to the BLLA Board of Directors for their approval.



The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

The Scholarship Recipients



Asa McLaughlin will attend UMASS-Amherst with an engineering degree as his eventual goal. He graduated with a 4.0+ GPA, taking a particularly challenging course of study. His school recommendation spoke not only of his strong work ethic, problem-solving, and inner drive but also his willingness to help fellow students. His resume showed a strong work ethic outside of school as well as a counselor for the Brewster Recreation Department, working at a local restaurant, and volunteering at the Elks Fish Fry and Rec youth basketball. He was noted to lead by example, demonstrating patience, compassion, and humor in his work with kids.

Lexi Milde will be attending Simmons University, with the goal of becoming a registered nurse. She also graduated with a 4.0+ GPA and took very challenging courses. She did this while balancing playing field hockey and tennis with year-round employment at a variety of jobs and volunteering at events and organizations for which the focus was visual impairments, as her mother is legally blind. One of her teachers gave Lexi a strong recommendation, noting that she demonstrated positivity, integrity, honesty, and friendship to those around her.

The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Volunteers Make It Happen

Book Binders



Youth Volunteers



Brewster in Bloom



Parade Walkers



The Library was fortunate to have 170 volunteers share their time and talents to devote 14,095 hours to Library endeavors this year. While this incredible group helps the Library with a multitude of daily tasks, volunteer highlights included the work of more than 40 volunteers at the 2023 Nickerson Lecture featuring Geraldine Brooks, contributions to Beautify Brewster, and participation in the Brewster in Bloom Parade, which featured the theme "Kraken Open a Book" and garnered the Library a "Best in Show" award from the Chamber of Commerce. Led by Volunteer Coordinator Lauren Elliot-Grunes, the BLL was also able to collect gifts for over 60 Cape Cod children in need through the Department of Children and Family's "Giving Tree" initiative in December, donate two boxes of children's books to young migrants in Yarmouth in January, and collect three carloads full of food and household items that were donated to the Family Pantry in honor of the Library's "Love Your Neighbor" initiative in February. We are deeply grateful for the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers, without whom these achievements would not have been possible.

The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Little Free Libraries

By Ross Gorman



The Little Free Libraries, situated at beaches, parks, and recreational areas continue to flourish. Good news! We stocked 1,598 titles this season, down from last year which was down from the year before. Why is this good news? Because the “take one, leave one” concept is really catching on. At least the same number of books are left by visitors as are taken; all of the volunteers have noticed full shelves when

they should be empty. We provide a terrific service to residents and visitors all summer long.

We placed the most books at Crosby Beach (478) where the “leave one” concept hasn't caught on as strongly, and the fewest at Captains' Golf (132), where golfers have left hundreds of new and interesting volumes. This is the largest box we have and it's almost always full of refreshed titles.

Val Bradley reports many books being left at Drummer Boy as well (377). Other locations: Nickerson (226), Paine's Creek (175), Breakwater Beach (308).

The equipment is holding up well, but it will receive maintenance and paint over the winter once the basement is accessible. This year, hooks were added for lost keys and they were well used!

Thanks as always to Val, Beth and Mark for keeping inventory up; to Rick and Lauren for providing a steady stream of books for us to stock; and to the DPW for installation and removal of the libraries. And of course thanks to the Board for supporting the concept and allowing us to raid book sale inventory, trading potential revenue for good will and community benefit.

The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Adult Programs

Loss of Spouse Grief Support with Maureen Keane-Bottino

The First Tuesday of the Month from 10:30-11:30am

On the first Tuesday of each month, join Maureen Keane-Bottino in a gathering for people living with the death of a spouse. The change of seasons, the progression of time, day to day activities, all can be overwhelming and challenging. In shared Grief experiences, we can create a community of support and comfort. Facilitated by Maureen Keane-Bottino, Licensed RN, Private Practice Grief Counselor.

Register at brewsterladieslibrary.org

Brewster Ladies' Library - 1822 Main St. Brewster, MA 02631



2nd & 4th Thursdays
3:30-4:30pm

Yoga Free & Open to all

Neighborhood

Yoga Neighborhood classes are taught by teachers that lead from the front of the room. Classes begin with a centering, focused on breathing, followed by gentle stretching and movement and ends with a final resting pose. Modifications are given during class and participants are encouraged to find what feels best in each pose. Classes are beginner friendly or great for those who have been practicing yoga. Everyone is welcome regardless and you'll feel refreshed!

Register at brewsterladieslibrary.org

Brewster Ladies' Library 1822 Main St, Brewster, MA 02631



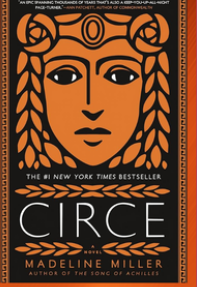
VIRTUAL SPEAKER SERIES

RETELLING GREEK CLASSICS: EXPLORING MODERN EPICS WITH AUTHOR MADELINE MILLER

THURSDAY, MARCH 21ST 7-8PM

YOU'RE INVITED TO A FASCINATING CONVERSATION WITH MADELINE MILLER, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE SONG OF ACHILLES AND CIRCE. AS SHE CHATS WITH US ABOUT HER BODY OF WORK AND HER PROCESS IN RETELLING GREEK CLASSICS INTO MODERN EPICS IN FICTION. RECORDING AVAILABLE 24 HOURS AFTER EVENT.

REGISTER AT BREWSTERLADIESLIBRARY.ORG



Food for Thought:

An Afternoon with the Brewster Cultural Council
Sat. Feb. 10th 2-4pm

Join the Brewster Cultural Council & Brewster Ladies' Library for an afternoon of food! The first hour of our program will be a discussion with John Carafoli, cookbook author and contributor to *Edible Cape Cod*, and Nicole Cormier, RD, cookbook author and Program Coordinator of Delicious Living Nutrition. The second hour will feature local food vendors, including Husk Cherry Bakehouse, The Optimal Kitchen, and coffee from Snowy Owl Coffee Roasters.

Register at brewsterladieslibrary.org

Mass Cultural Council | Brewster Ladies' Library 508-896-3913 | 1822 Main Street, Brewster, MA 02645



For adult audiences, the BLL was proud to offer standout programming such as Food for Thought, a collaborative event with the Cultural Council that highlighted local food gurus and businesses, a virtual chocolate tour in indigenous Bribri territory, a talk on the war in Ukraine with Professor Michael Strmiska, and of course the ever popular Summer and Winter Concert Series. In addition, this year also brought another successful adult Summer Reading Program with 104 participants, receiving a free copy of Ben Shattuck's *Six Walks* and earning raffle tickets for a chance to win gift cards to the Brewster Book Store, the Kitchen Cafe, and the Brewster Bird House. The Library was also particularly proud of its various wellness-focused endeavors, which included regular grief support group meetings and monthly yoga classes with Yoga Neighborhood. Finally, the Library became a member of the Library Speakers Consortium, which offers 3-4 virtual talks each month with best-selling authors and thought leaders, including Joy Harjo, the 23rd U.S. Poet Laureate, actor John Stamos, NPR Legal Affairs Correspondent Nina Totenberg, and Smithsonian Curator Paula J. Johnson.

The Year in Review

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Youth Programs



The Youth Services department was also busy with lots of offerings for Brewster children and families. In addition to the Library's regular weekly story times, Michelle Benoit added a weekly Babies & Books Story Time on Thursday mornings for children 0-2 that was an immediate success. Since November 2023, Michelle has offered 32 Babies & Books sessions, bringing in 960 children and their caregivers. With both story time sessions averaging about 30 attendees each, Michelle's storytimes welcomed 2,465 patrons into the Library in fiscal year 2024 alone.

Like its adult counterpart, the BLL's youth Summer Reading Program proved very popular with 131 children registering and receiving a free book thanks to the support of the Brewster Ladies' Library Association. The BLLA also provided over 300 books to each child who participated in the Food 4 Kids program, an initiative that provides free meals and books to children and teens during the summer months when school is out. Along with other youth programming staples such as Toddler Town, the Lego Club, After School Makerspace, and Nintendo Switch tournaments, the BLL's Halloween Parade, a special Taylor Swift Party, and the school vacation week programs were all wildly successful and brought lots of joy to Brewster's families.

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