

## **REPORT OF THE WELLESLEY FREE LIBRARY BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

FY10 was another busy year for The Wellesley Free Library (WFL) as it continued to strengthen its role as Wellesley's community gathering place and cultural destination for our citizens. Circulation and usage at both the main and branch libraries have continued to increase. Attendance at free programs and classes has been strong, and space at the main library is in high demand. In the face of an increasingly tight budget, the dedication of the library staff allows the WFL to continue to set and meet high goals for standards of service to the residents of Wellesley.

### **Budgeting**

The Trustees of the WFL recognize the severe fiscal constraints resulting from the economic downturn. To ensure the most effective usage of limited funds, the Trustees undertook two budgeting initiatives in FY10: a rebuilding of the budget from the ground up and a complete analysis of all sources and uses of library funds. The improved budgeting process allowed the Administration to allocate funds based on how the library is run, rather than focusing on what could be cut. Needs were identified by department, providing the Trustees with the information required to approve reductions in preservation and circulation in order for the WFL to meet the 1% budget increase cap. The analysis of funding sources (town, private, and state) allowed the Trustees and Administration to better understand the complete picture of how the WFL is able to continue to provide the exceptional level of service expected by Wellesley residents and emphasized the importance of continued development of public-private partnerships.

### **Wellesley Free Library Foundation**

The WFL Foundation has now completed its first full year of operation. The Foundation will raise private funds to leverage and stretch public dollars, helping the WFL to maintain the level of excellence the Town has come to expect. The WFL Trustees have developed a five-year plan for initiatives which could be funded by the Foundation. Funds will be sought to enhance and expand library programs, services and other projects that are identified in this plan.

### **RFID (Radio Frequency ID System)**

The WFL made a giant technological leap forward this year with the installation of a new Radio Frequency ID System (RFID). This system will allow the WFL to handle a continually increasing demand without requiring additional staff to maintain current levels of service. The system was purchased through the generosity of the Building Fund, with money that was raised as part of the capital campaign for the new main library building. This RFID technology is one of the best to automate and speed up manual tasks. There are numerous benefits from this system, including faster checkout, fewer lost materials, reduction in staff repetitive motion injuries, better inventory control, and improved customer service. Much of the WFL collection was tagged in FY10 and implementation is expected to be completed in early FY11. This is the final project of the WFL Building Fund. Future building upkeep and capital enhancements will need to be funded through other sources.

The Library Trustees and Administration continue to support the updating of existing technology and introduction of new technologies. The WFL website is updated and

enhanced on an ongoing basis. The audience for the E-newsletter has continued to expand over the past year, while new databases have been added for patron use.

### **Going “Green” at the WFL**

The WFL has undertaken several initiatives to support the community’s efforts at increasing energy efficiency. First, the Administration and Trustees are committed to working towards the goal of a 20% reduction in energy usage by 2013. In addition, as part of a town project, the WFL has installed a digital display in the lobby which allows real-time monitoring of energy usage in the main library building. This effort has been educational for both library staff and patrons. Finally, the WFL has begun circulation of kilowatt meters to allow patrons to monitor home usage of energy.

### **Other Service Enhancements**

Each year, the Administration and Trustees undertake specific projects aimed at clarifying procedures, increasing service levels, and streamlining processes. In FY10, the Trustees updated their bylaws, created a conflict of interested policy, and reviewed and refined all other library policies. In addition, the Administration created a Customer Services Task Force. All departments of the library were represented on this industrious committee. The resulting recommendations include improvements to facilities, outreach, information desk, signage, and staff training.

### **Library Usage in FY ’10 The Library’s Collection**

Total Main Library circulation increased to 667,173 in the past year, a 3% increase over last year. This number included 33,898 self-check outs and 83,097 renewals by people accessing their accounts through the library's website.

The circulation statistics reported above only describe one piece of the picture in measuring library use. Other statistics of interest for FY ’10 are:

- 462,486 visits to the Main Library
- 41,219 reference transactions
- 10,940 children in attendance at 257 children’s programs
- 6,282 people in attendance at general interest programs
- 514,991 visits to the library website [www.wellesleyfreelibrary.org](http://www.wellesleyfreelibrary.org)
- 19,627 patrons using laptops and wireless connection
- 18,270 Wellesley residents with library cards.

### **The Library's Collection**

In FY ’10 total library holdings are as follows:

- 239,62 books
- 17,221 audio cassettes and CDs
- 14,533 video cassettes and DVDs.

The library also offers access to 4,246 audio titles in a downloadable format from the website.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ann-Mara Lanza  
Board of Library Trustees