

Blue Hill Library Notes

Special Edition Fall/Winter 2016

2016: BUSIEST YEAR YET?

The Blue Hill Public Library is one of the few places on the Peninsula where people of all ages and backgrounds gather to learn, be entertained, and to work together. As a social hotspot it is surpassed only by Tradewinds Marketplace. It is fair to say that the library is well-used and well-loved by many people.

In fact, so far this is our busiest year for patron visits in our long history. We are on track to top our record of 127,000 visits in 2009. If you are involved in one of the over 80 community groups and non-profits that use our meeting rooms, you know that they are in hot demand and can be tricky to schedule. Our corner of the world is full of inquisitive, inspired, creative, busy people. We are honored that many of them find a home at BHPL.

Did you know that the library is currently open 55 hours per week—which puts us among the Maine libraries with the most service hours? Only the big city and university libraries stay open longer, unless you count the tiny island library that leaves a key under the door mat!

However, 2,860 hours per year of friendly, helpful staff plus heat and electricity come at a price that only goes up. Truth is, as our fundraising comes down to the wire each December, we never know if we will raise enough money. Our budget expands because the needs of this community continue to grow. So, in order for this growth to be sustainable, patron donations need to grow as well. If you have never given to the library, this is a great time to start! If you are a long-time supporter, consider increasing your annual gift, even a little, to keep pace with rising costs. And if you are fortunate enough to perhaps be a major contributor, consider the reach and impact a gift to the library would have. No matter the size, your donation will help us “open doors to information, culture, community and the world” for your friends and neighbors on the Blue Hill Peninsula.



THE PATH TO BLUE HILL

By HANNAH CYRUS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

When I was finishing graduate school in Boston last spring and was beginning to look for a job, I knew exactly what I wanted. I wanted to move back to Maine and to work in a public library in a small town. I wanted a job where I could answer reference questions, create library programs, work in



circulation, and really get to know the library patrons. I wanted to work in a library that was at the center of its community.

While this sounds like a perfect description of Blue Hill, it is important to understand that the job I described is incredibly rare. Many of my classmates were having trouble finding any library work, let alone their dream jobs, so I settled myself in for a long job search. I decided I would hold out for just the right opportunity and wait as long as I needed. Blue Hill was the fourth job I applied to, and definitely my favorite. I left my interview unable to stop thinking of how much I wanted to live and work here.

To say I was surprised when I was offered the Assistant Director position at BHPL would be an understatement. I was floored, overjoyed. In the span of two weeks, I graduated with my Master's degree, quit my office job, packed everything I owned, said goodbye to my friends and my sister in Boston,

—continued on other side

I ♥ Blue Hill Library

Donating is easy and there are many ways to support BHPL.
(plus we'll send you a snazzy sticker!)

- Make a **direct donation** of any amount by cash, check, or credit card.
- Become a **4-Seasons donor** and make automatic monthly payments
- Attend one of our **fundraisers**.
- **Donate or buy books** from Friends of the Library
- Include the library in your **legacy plans**.

More info & to donate online: www.BHPL.net

The library is a treasured community resource, made possible by your tax-deductible donations.

bought a car, and moved to Blue Hill.

During my first months here, I have been uniformly impressed by the beautiful library, the amazing staff, and the diverse and interesting patrons who come through our doors. My favorite thing about being here and having this job is how, every time I introduce myself to someone new and say "I work at the library," they respond, "Oh, I LOVE that library!" This has happened too many times to count, and it's a truly special thing.

When you spend two and a half years studying library science, you get some pretty detailed ideas of what a library could and should be. It can be hard for any real place to live up to those expectations. I'm happy to report that the Blue Hill Library does, and more. From its inception, this library has been so forward thinking, with its 1930s bookmobile, film screenings and lectures, and the belief that anyone should be able to express their interests and have them supported by the library. I feel privileged to be upholding those ideals and being part of a legacy of smart, dedicated, unflinching women and men who have worked here before (and with!) me.

So thank you, to all who have welcomed me with such open arms. I hope folks continue to introduce themselves—I promise I will remember your names eventually! And if you have a question you want answered, some research you need help with, an event you'd like to see (or host!), or any other suggestions, please come see me. That's what I'm here for, after all. hannah.cyrus@bhpl.net

HOLIDAY PARTY: DECEMBER 17TH! FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY



The Friends of the Library Holiday Party is not to be missed. Some people even bring their own chairs to be sure they get a good seat for the entertainment! All are invited December 17th 2:00-6:00 PM for carols, cookies, music, magic and good cheer.



Say hello to the new generator! Thanks to 1 excavator, 1 general contractor, 1 electrician, 1 engineer, 1 caretaker, 1 library director, 13 board members, 7 building & grounds committee members, 1 memorial fund, 2 family foundations, a bequest, 64 individual donations and the Friends of the Library, BHPL can now stay open when the power goes out.

THE POWER OF CONNECTION

Like many, Curtiss Martin spent his childhood summers in Maine. His love for the state grew during his visits with his grandmother in Northeast Harbor and as a Robin Hood camper in Brooksville. So, when he began planning for retirement, he knew he wanted to settle on the Peninsula.

Curtiss and his wife, Virginia Drewry, built a house in Brooksville and started counting the days until they could move here full time. Curtiss was alone in Brooksville on an advance trip in the fall of 2014 when a snow storm hit and shut down power to his home for two weeks. During that time the library, which had extended its hours, became his connection to light, warmth, running water, electricity and small town life. He was impressed by how everyone came together—sharing outlets, filling water jugs, bringing in cookies—making sure that everyone was all right. "He was so touched by the welcome he felt. He spoke about how the library was the true center of the community, its heart, and how it facilitated community building," Virginia said. When Curtiss died unexpectedly that spring, his family chose the library for memorial gifts, designating a special fund to jump-start the purchase of a generator. "There are just too many important things that can't happen if the library has to close, whether it's a weekly ritual for a girl and her grandfather or a local organization's meeting. How wonderful to know that people can depend on the library being open when they need it most. A generator isn't very romantic, but I think Curtiss would approve."