

**MONROE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**ANNUAL REPORT: FISCAL YEAR 2003-2004**

**William J. Ehlers, Chairman, Library Board of Trustees**  
**Robert R. Gallucci, Library Director**

**FUNCTION:**

Access to information resources is a cornerstone of our democracy. Moreover, enjoyment of current and classic books, tapes, and other materials is a worthwhile way to spend leisure time. In fulfilling its role as the primary resource for knowledge, reading, research, and popular media in print, nonprint, and electronic formats, the Monroe Public Library serves as the knowledge navigator for our community. To accomplish our mission, the library will provide trained staff and a wide variety of materials, equipment, services, and programs to support a lifetime of reading, listening, viewing, and learning.

**STATISTICS:**

During the fiscal period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004, the library staff continued to serve our patrons by:

- Circulating 163,100 items
- Answering 11,511 reference questions – an all-time high
- Requesting 1,377 interlibrary loans, 1,057 of which were received
- Placing 4,626 item reserves
- Processing 1,358 magazine requests
- Delivering 567 books and audiovisual items to homebound residents through 146 trips
- Issuing library cards to 1,027 new patrons, giving us total of 8,818 active registered borrowers on June 30, 2004
- Sponsoring 213 programs to inform and entertain children, teens, and adults, with 4,860 attending. Twenty-nine (29) adult programs attracted 355 attendees, while 184 youth events drew audiences totaling 4,505.
- Increasing the library's holdings to 79,501 items, including 71,796 books and 7,705 audiovisual items, on June 30, 2004
- Performing free notary services for 51 town residents
- Performing faxing services for 153 town residents

Our patrons:

- Performed 11,693 searches on our electronic databases
- Consulted our homepage 26,834 times
- Used our public Internet computers 3,558 times, our public word processor 157 times, and our public typewriter 39 times
- Made 111,679 visits to the library

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR:**

- The library was open fewer hours this year than last. Due to repeated budget referendum defeats in the spring of 2003, the library staff was reduced in size

effective July 1. This caused a cut of 5 hours per week from our business schedule. Quieter times were chosen: Thursday evenings and Saturdays from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

- On September 29, 2003, the voters on Monroe overwhelmingly approved construction of a new \$5.3 million library building. Plans for the two-level colonial brick structure of 32,000 square feet were completed soon thereafter. Town officials appointed a building committee in January 2004, hired a Clerk of the Works in March, and solicited bids for a general contractor in April. On April 16, eleven (11) bids were opened. Unfortunately, all proved to be too high, thanks to the sudden, dramatic, and unforeseen spike in the price of building materials in December 2003. At fiscal year's end, town officials were reviewing the plans in hopes of making subtle changes that would lower the price without impacting appearance or functionality. Bids will be solicited again during the summer of 2004. Throughout the year, The Friends of the Library sponsored activities to raise funds for enhancements for the new building, and The Friends maintained the treasury of private donations.
- To spread the word about what the library has and does, the Director continued to write his weekly "*Library Did You Know?*" column in the *Monroe Courier* for a second year. In the same vein, the Adult Services staff worked tirelessly to expand the information and services found on the library's homepage.
- Our collection of electronic databases continued to be diverse, comprehensive, and highly useful for researchers of all kinds. Many could be accessed remotely from home, school, or office through our homepage. Several new purchases and upgrades throughout the year improved our computer hardware, in preparation for our network's software migration scheduled for September 2004. In December, a flatbed scanner was donated for patron use. The library purchased a new microform reader/printer with a generous donation from the Edith S. Wheeler Trust.
- Our *Home Delivery of Library Materials* program was revamped in an effort to attract more homebound Monroe residents, and response was satisfactory.
- With the school's permission, Adult Services Librarian Fred Danowski began to digitize our collection of Masuk High School yearbooks. Soon, library users will be able to view these popular items electronically on our website.
- Several staff members assisted Monroe Senior Center Director Sharon Gesek in setting up a book discussion club at the center. We again served as a site through which the town's Social Services Department could solicit donations of gifts for Monroe residents facing bleak holidays due to illness or unemployment.

#### TRUSTEES, STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND FRIENDS:

- The library's 6 trustees continued to act responsibly by adopting the policies within which the library operates and by advocating on the library's behalf in public.
- Our staff of 7 full-time and 14 part-time employees continued to maintain high standards of customer service, knowledge, professionalism, and goodwill.

- Our team of 20 dedicated volunteers donated 2,122.5 hours of free labor this year. At a reception held in May, each received a small gift to show our appreciation.
- Year after year, The Friends of the Monroe Public Library shows its love of the library through monetary gifts, hard work, and moral support. This year, members paid to renew all of our cultural site admission passes, purchased several new passes, bought new collection materials, and subsidized several children's programs. They also supervised special fundraising efforts that will pay for upgrades and enhancements in the new library building. In June 2004, The Friends' annual booksale was expanded to a 5-day affair that raised a record-smashing \$11,000, most of which was earmarked to benefit the library building fund.

#### DONATIONS:

The library benefited by the generosity of over 200 Monroe residents, businesses, and organizations through the receipt of:

- Books, audiovisual items, and equipment valued at \$15,543
- Monetary gifts totaling \$10,176, including \$8,224 from the Edith S. Wheeler Trust. All donations were used to purchase books, audiovisual materials, programs, and special equipment.
- Grants from the State of Connecticut totaling \$2,990

#### CONCLUSION:

Library hours are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. *Please contact us!*

- Telephone: 452-5458, 452-5459, and 452-5481
- Fax: 261-3359
- Email: [monroe-ref@biblio.org](mailto:monroe-ref@biblio.org)
- Homepage: [www.biblio.org/monroe](http://www.biblio.org/monroe)

Robert R. Gallucci  
Library Director