

**JOINT FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CHATHAMS  
CHATHAM, NEW JERSEY 07928**

**ANNUAL REPORT, 2009  
Diane R. O'Brien, Director**

"Nothing endures but change."

Confucian analects bk 15:34

If this year has been anything, it has been a year of change. The focus of much of our patron service has been skewed by the economy and the demands it has placed upon our patrons. We are happy to be able to assist them. A portion of our materials budget has been allocated to materials (both print and on-line) which assist people in job search, training, testing, and new ventures. The Friends of The Library have helped us in this endeavor.

We have seen changes in technology, and this will not be altered anytime soon. As with our print materials, our technology needs to be updated as new things are created and new patron demands emerge.

Our building has seen changes, mostly due to its aging structure. The roof leaks have created problems of mold and remediation, which have been addressed. The electrical panel has still not been replaced and that must be done (the contract is signed), so that we are up to code.

Last, but certainly not least, we have had staff changes. It's unusual to see so many positions change in one year. Roz Libbey, Head of Technical Services, retired and relocated out of State. Her position was filled by Mary Kennedy, who had been a Reference Librarian. Mary's position was filled by Robert Schriek, who had been a part-time weekend Reference Librarian. Joan Hipp was appointed Director of the Florham Park Library. Jay Chatterjee, our Children's Librarian, applied for and was given Joan's old position as Head of Reference. Our last staff change will actually occur in the New Year as we will have to replace Jay as Children's Librarian. It is our hope that 2010 will be a little less hectic.

The following figures will give you some indication of our past year, in terms of numbers. Department reports will flesh out these numbers.

*In 2009, 5,286 patrons attended 329 adult programs/meetings/events.  
Our 237 juvenile events attracted 7,022 youngsters and adults.  
The people counter recorded 242,000 persons entering the building.*

**BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

This past year has been consumed with building issues, and we are not finished yet. But, hopefully, the worst is behind us. We started the year with roof problems and some of the repairs were done, while some will be completed in 2010. The electrical panel replacement will also be completed in 2010. Work was done on sidewalks and steps. The slate steps at the Main Street entrance will be done in early 2010. The mold remediation project was finally completed in the first week of January, 2010. It was a week-long process and quite troublesome. It is good to have it behind us.

On a bright note, John and Helen Gardner continue to work on the plantings which surround the Library building. It is quite amazing to see what they have accomplished over the last four

years, all paid for by the Friends of The Library. Chatham Borough Public Works staff help with some of the “heavy lifting,” such as preparing the beds and mulching, and several garden clubs assist with upkeep. In 2009, Chatham Borough was awarded the Morris County McFlowertown Award, mostly because of the Library’s gardens. The plaque is near the Main Street entrance to the Library.

### AUTOMATION

Please see Reference and Technical Services Reports.

### FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

After their annual meeting in January, the Friends start in earnest on their huge Book Sale event. They actually work on it all year long, but the effort intensified greatly starting in mid-January.

In 2009, the opening night for members, was Friday, March 13, followed by the big day for the public on March 14. We had concerns that the economy would have a real negative effect on the sale proceeds, but it did not turn out as badly as we had feared. What actually happened was that some people spent less, but there were more customers. As a result, the amount raised, \$21,038 was almost as great as the year before. A sign of the times was that one dealer gave us a check that bounced (for over \$1,300). That had never happened before.

The Friends carried through with all their regular activities. They got out the annual solicitation for members, resulting in over \$21,000 in membership funds. They helped us celebrate National Library Week. They purchased beautiful wooden display shelving with panels for display and lights to highlight the books, and new furniture for the Lundt Meeting Room and the Children’s Room. They hosted their annual Volunteer Event, a brunch, in May, (volunteer of the year was Andy Bent), and the annual Luncheon for School Librarians in June. Many of the Friends help with the summer reading program, even though they do not meet during the summer months. As mentioned before, John and Helen Gardner tend to the flowers all year, and a Friends Board member, Barbara Montague, turned her photographs of the flowers into note cards which are being sold to benefit the Library.

The Friends continued to stock the Book Stalls around the communities. With the Bank of America in the Township closing soon, they will relocate that stall and still have seven stalls filled with over 400 paperbacks each month. And, of course, each December, the Friends host their wonderful holiday party here at the Library. People look forward to it each year to start the holiday season.

### GIFTS/SPECIAL ACCOUNTS

We received an astonishing \$39,235 in gifts in 2009, and spent over \$35,000. Almost \$10,000 of it was spent for new books that budgeted funds could not supply. Most of these books are in memory of or in honor of a person. The remainder has been spent on what we call non-books, equipment and special services. Most of the equipment has been provided from the Friends of The Library. One new project from the Friends includes all the equipment and supplies needed to set up the new charge/discharge center in Chatham Township Municipal Building. The Nicolais Fund is used for digitalization of materials.

We received another \$21,490 in Book Sale funds, and spent \$12,845. Other major dedicated gifts were from The Charles L. Read Foundation, The Buesing Children’s Fund for juvenile programs, The Chatham Jaycees, and annual funds from Morris-Union Federation (mostly spent on periodicals for staff and in our “specialties,” psychology, earth science, and health).

Under Special Accounts, we took in \$5,870 in copier fees, and spent \$7,590, which included the purchase of a new copier for staff. Lost & Paid funds to the tune of \$2,500 were spent on replacing books and materials. Our accumulated Room Rental fees allowed us to paint the Lundt meeting room and have lower level carpets cleaned.

### MAIN

The Morris Automated Information Network OLIS office changed directors in February. Bill Baylis became the new director at that time. A new MAIN membership agreement was signed by all MAIN members. Our contract with Sirsi Dynix expired this year. We investigated open source arrangements, but decided to stay where we are for another year, at least.

### HIGHLANDS REGIONAL LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

Our biggest concern with HRLC was continued Interlibrary Loan delivery. This is an extremely important service for library patrons. The HRLC managed to secure State funds to help us keep the deliveries going. They also continued to offer excellent seminars to professional library staff members throughout the region. This helps us to keep our staff training current. We would be hard pressed to do this on our own.

### MORRIS COUNTY LIBRARY

We continue to hold our MAIN meetings at the County Library for the most part. They have ample meeting and parking space.

### MORRIS UNION FEDERATION

MUF continues to function in a near effortless fashion. Most traffic between libraries is foot traffic, as patrons shop, bank, etc., in their various towns. We continue to meet twice a year to be sure all is going well.

### PERSONNEL

These changes have all been addressed earlier in this report. The Head of Children's Services is a position we hope to fill in January.

### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Your director continues to serve as Chairman of the County-wide MAIN Membership Committee. Other commitments are the MAIN Planning Council meetings, the MAIN Finance Committee, and the MAIN Ad Hock Committees as they arise. Participation in NJLA and the Highland Regional Library Cooperative activities continue. The director also holds the position of Treasurer for Morris Union Federation.

Locally, the director attends Kiwanis meetings and the annual meetings of our two Historical Societies, and Safety Meetings of Chatham Borough.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

### CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT – Jayashree Chatterjee, Head

“A little oasis within Chatham of learning and creativity,” is the way Mrs. Irwin, mother of Jason and Catherine, described the Children's Department during the summer. This year, our aim, as always, was to offer programs and resources to children that would satisfy their educational and creative needs.

We offered many good programs in 2009, and several Chatham residents helped make the programs successful. Fifteen residents volunteered to be storytime leaders and some of them, former school teachers Michele Damodaran and Kathleen Lane, library school student Robert Carter, and volunteer Alan Serio, were outstanding. Also, four volunteers read stories at the Chatham Borough Farmers' Market. There were other areas in which our volunteers worked as well. Cynthia O'Gorman colored 18 mobiles for us to hand during the Reading Club. This year, we also asked the nannies to color some of the team figures. They did, and we were impressed by their work. We hope it made them feel more committed to the Children's Room and to everything that we try to achieve here. During the summer, at our request aimed at drawing more boys into the Library, scout leader Clinton Baker did three special events for us and photographer Andrew Bobeck held a digital photography workshop for children. He also judged the photography contest that we held. Mr. Bobeck was so pleased with the entries that he enlarged and framed the winning photograph at his own cost, and presented the photograph to the winner.

Over 7,000 children attended our programs this year. This number is the highest we have had so far. We thought that the public library should offer extra programs at a time when people were hurting due to the economy. We had a wide variety of programs in the summer and more programs than we usually offer during the December holidays. Our summer programs ranged from chess and knot tying workshops to art and animal programs, including a make-believe fossil hunt. Our art programs were for a wide age range, for children ages 20 to 36 months, boys and girls aged 3 to 5 years, and for 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> graders. In addition to our first photography contest in the summer, Mrs. Chatterjee created our first Library blog this summer. It was a good way for young people of the community to express themselves and many boys and girls wrote book and media reviews and creative pieces for the blog

Our volunteers also included school students. Tommy Schacht (Lafayette Avenue School), Olivia Justin (Middle School) and Christopher Matturi (Newark Academy, High School) were among our most committed volunteers. Tommy and Olivia were *older buddies* in Book Buddies, a program where younger children read to older children. Christopher came in every day during the summer to work with us, and this year, 121 students listened to book reports for the Reading Club. An added event was a mini-book discussion group run by 9<sup>th</sup> grader Maggie Lamb. She invited 4<sup>th</sup>- and 5<sup>th</sup>-grade girls to discuss popular books with her; we were really pleased with the depth of the discussions.

Several members of The Friends of The Library helped us supervise some of the many programs that we organized. TeeDee Carroll, Barbara Butta, and Ruthann Wichelman in particular, helped us a great deal. Apart from supervising programs, Ruthann also came in every Wednesday and worked in a number of different areas.

The Friends of The Library sponsored most of our programs. The Ann L. Buesing Fund enabled us to offer special programs for 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the summer. During the summer, we were able to have programs practically every day. That was something we wanted to do because we knew that people would look to their public library for the fulfillment of their recreational needs in trying economic times. The Woman's Club of Chatham paid for our Reading Club incentive prizes, and the Kiwanis Club sponsored the end-of-summer picnic

Other Chatham-based organizations gave us gift money as well. The Jaycees made it possible for us to purchase a new games computer. The Mom's Club, and long-standing funds like The Marshall Family Fund and the MacGregor Fund, helped us purchase books that we could not have purchased with our regular funds.

We work with a great group of school librarians. Mike D'Aloia of Southern Boulevard School wrote a play for us at the beginning of the summer, and he and Mrs. Chatterjee performed it at her Reading Club presentation. Jennifer Ciffrodella of Milton Avenue School, Joel Kuhn of Washington Avenue School, and Maureen Stryker of Lafayette Avenue School, reinforced what Jay was saying during her presentations at their schools. Joel Kuhn retired this summer and it was with real sadness that we said good bye to him. Joel and Jay were at library school together, and he was a very good person to work with.

Summer Reading Program: We had hoped that 600 children would be in the Reading Club; unfortunately, only 573 children joined, reading 8,715 books. Many libraries reported this kind of experience. Most children's librarians said that their summer programs were very well attended – as were ours – but that fewer children joined the Reading Clubs. According to one librarian, the reason was that more parents stayed at home this summer and took their children on day trips, and so they came to the library for programs that they could attend as a family. It is also interesting to note that in August there were two articles in *The New York Times* about children and reading. The writer felt that more and more, children were turning to computer games rather than to books to satisfy their recreational needs.

In our Library, there was a lot of enthusiasm for the club among those who joined our reading program. Participants like Samantha Murphy, Ivan Rozhkov and Shobhit Samar, to name a few, reported on their books regularly, and when we had programs that they wanted to attend, they came in early so that they could report on their books before the program began. Mrs. McEvoy, whose 6-year-old son Timothy joined the club, said that Timothy was so excited about reporting on his books and getting prizes that his excitement encouraged his 3 1/2-year-old brother Aidan to join the club. *"It's been a wonderful experience for our family,"* said Mrs. McEvoy, *"and a very fulfilling summer."*

Collection Development: Many new books on Lincoln were published this year due to the Lincoln Bicentennial. We bought books at different reading levels on the sixteenth president. We also bought many animal and country books and the *39 Clues* series, which is popular because it ties into a web site where readers have to go to play the associated game. We also bought many Magic Rainbow books because they are popular with younger girls and Star Wars, Batman, Spider-man and Superman books.

Staff: The Children's Department staff - our regular, weekend and summer staff - do an excellent job. Jaime Sabonya is a joy to work with, Henry Mann and Christine Dunning work hard at shelving our books, and Alice Roche and Jean Morrissey supervise the room very efficiently during the weekend. Our summer staff members are interested in the success of the Reading Club and very enthusiastic about what they do.

Coda: These are some of the comments we heard in the Children's Department during the course of the year:

*"This is the most children-friendly library I have been to."*

*"Your programs are so good that I wish I were a child attending these programs."* – Mrs. Flynn, mother of Brian, Danny & Megan.

*"The Library has become our second home."* - Mrs. Parsch, commenting on our summer programs.

And finally, *"Thank God for the Library! There's always something creative to do!"* - Mrs. Harris, mother of Matt & Millie.

### ADULT SERVICES – Deborah Fitzgerald, Head

In December, the Visions Art Group, a group of artists associated with the Millburn-Short Hills Art Center, held a show of its multi-media artwork through the month. The show represented the work of seven talented artists. There was no reception, and no paintings were sold. Art shows are held monthly by The Friends of The Library (except March and December, usually); they receive 20% of sales.

Also, in December, Mike Dutko of Spring Lake presented a travelogue on Christmas around the world. Attendance was average for the two showings. We had an annual increase in meeting room use overall by 5.4% and an increase in attendance by 6%. There was an increase in Library-sponsored programs by 11% and an increase in attendance by 4%.

The meeting rooms are used by a great number of local organizations (like the Board of Trustees of the Library; Friends of The Library activities; Woman's Club of The Chathams, Library Book Club, N. J. Jazz Society; Chatham Community Band and Chatham Community Players; Red Cross; Adult School; Boy and Girl Scouts; Soccer Club; League of Women Voters; the Democrats and the Republicans; Minisink Club; Chatham Newcomers and Neighbors; Sierra Club; Embroiderers' Guild; to name a few). Library-sponsored services include monthly Blood Pressure Screenings (co-sponsored by Borough Board of Health), Notary Public, and VITA free income tax assistance, among others. Program subjects ranged from acupuncture to college planning, and author talks to film series and arm-chair travelogues.

We had an additional 19,336 people over 2008 using the Library facility in 2009, bringing the yearly total to 242,000, which is an increase of 8.6%.

The Circulation staff has been busier than last year. The two full-time circulation assistants have to be supplemented by a number of part-timers. Janet Skakum, Coordinating Library Assistant, attends MAIN Circulation Committee meetings.

Our pages have done a great job this year. Besides getting the books back to the shelves in a timely manner, they work well together covering each other's hours during vacation time and illness.

The Library is grateful to all our volunteers who have given their time to us over the past year. They have helped us with the children's summer reading club, finding materials claimed returned, repairing our damaged materials, shelf-reading, pulling books to consider for weeding, blood pressure screening - the list continues. We could not have done all we accomplished without them. Our total number of volunteers increased by 18%; however, hours worked decreased by 17.7%.

We added 184 titles to the young adult fiction and nonfiction collection.

#### Adult Audio/Visual Collection:

A special gift of 22 critical interpretations of classic novels on compact disc was added to the adult nonfiction collection.

In 2009, 971 audio-visual items were added. This is a slight 17-item increase of last year's total. 145 items were deleted from the audio-visual collection. This marks far fewer deletions, in fact 250 fewer deletions, than in 2008. These numbers underscore another growing area of the collection. We are very fortunate to have the space we do.

The breakdown includes 153 music compact discs (purchased from budget funds) and 95 books on CD (purchased from budget funds and FOL gifts). One Book on Tape and 45 VHS tapes were added, all donations. The remainder is DVDs which were purchased and added (ALL purchased from non-budget funds; DVD/VHS rental fees were the main source), and 12 Playaways, paid for by the Friends of The Library. The supplies needed to package and circulate all these items are also covered by AV Fees.

A great deal of time is spent inspecting audio-visual materials before discharging, and many, many pieces are then put in the mending or replacement file. All replacements are paid for from Lost/Paid income. Processing, re-processing, and mending are also very time-consuming. However, the circulation of AV materials is booming. This year's percentage of total circulation is a little over 30%. In numbers, there was an increase of 6.35% over the circulation of 2008.

#### REFERENCE SERVICES – Joan Hipp, Head

The year began and ended with taxes. In late December Mrs. Hipp gave a man 2008 tax forms that we had saved from January. He was delighted and said it was always a pleasure to deal with us. When a patron uses the word pleasure and taxes in the same sentence, you know you are doing a good job. More about taxes: In January we were able to display our tax forms on the slanted display shelving like the periodicals. This was very nice. Patrons could easily identify the form located behind the lift-up shelf. After tax season we used the shelves for displays. Then in mid-December, when tax forms began to arrive, they became the tax form shelves again.

The Book Group met monthly during 2009, taking a break for summer and December. They began in January with a discussion of The Tender Bar and finished in November with The Catcher in the Rye. Mary Kennedy and Joan Hipp shared the facilitator role. We tried to cover a variety of books. Among the selections for 2009 was The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, a view of the world through the eyes of an autistic boy, American Wife, which addressed the question of what sacrifices and compromises might be made for the sake of a marriage, and Case Histories, an excellent mystery. Other staff members may be trying their hand as facilitator in the coming year.

There was, as usual, a lot of activity involving technology. We installed a file server for storage of our documents and work in February. This allows us to back up our work to an external source so if the PC crashes, we do not lose our files. We can also open files that are on the server from various PCs, so staff can work on a report at the reference desk or at the desk in the office; the file is accessible from both PCs. We purchased, and OLIS installed, power backup units for our Network. This equipment is in the "router room" and helps to protect our hardware in the case of power failure.

There were ongoing problems with the Network early in the year. OLIS swapped out equipment in attempts to discover what the problem might be. They also recommended adding air-conditioning to the "router room." Over the years we have added several pieces of heat-generating hardware to that space and the heat might have caused the network outages. The Director arranged for an air-conditioning unit to be installed to keep the room cooled. That and/or the swapped equipment seemed to have resolved the issue of network outages. By the end of the year, we had gone for several months without a problem.

We installed Office 2007 on public PCs. We also replaced 17 aging GX270 PCs at the end of the summer. These were mostly staff PCs. OLIS was no longer going to support them since they were out of warranty and 5+ years old. We also replaced two monitors earlier in the year.

We got an adaptor so patrons can use their “memory cards” on our PCs. Patrons plug their card into the adaptor which plugs into the PC’s USB port. This allows access for sending photos and other items via their email with our public PCs.

There were requests for a scanner, so late in the year we got one for the public to use. The scanner is set up in one of the carrels with one of the old training laptops. A gentleman used it recently to scan a photograph of his dog. He then emailed it to a T-shirt company that will make him a shirt with his dog’s picture on it. Isn’t it amazing how libraries help the public?

The Friends financed the purchase of Dream Weaver software for web design. Tom Gray worked on a redesigned webpage with input from Joan Hipp. It is ready to launch, so look for it in 2010.

We added some new databases at the end of the year, such as *Ancestry.com*, a much requested genealogy database that can only be accessed in the Library. We had held off on getting this database because the State was supplying *HeritageQuest*, a remotely accessible but less robust database. In the fall, we decided that, since we had available funds and patrons had asked for it, we would add *Ancestry.com*. Recently, the State announced that due to budget problems, they would no longer be supplying *HeritageQuest*. We will see if MAIN decides to pick it up or if HRLC negotiates a good discount for 2010.

Two other databases that we added were *LearningExpress Library* and Gale’s *Career Transitions*. The Friends paid for our basic and computer software module subscription to *LearningExpress Library*, a database of tests and tutorials. We paid to add an essay module to the subscription. *Career Transitions* walks users through the job search process, from a career assessment test, through resume creation to a job search. We think both of these resources will be useful for patrons who have been hurt by the loss of jobs in the current economy. We set up four training laptops for patrons to check out for in library use with these resources. That way they can use them for as long as needed with no fear of being timed out. We have these ready to go, look for them in 2010.

The Friends also paid for a Kindle DX loaded with four newspapers and four magazine subscriptions. We received it in December and have worked out the policy for its use. Patrons will be able to check it out at reference and use it to read papers and magazines in the Library. We think the adjustable font feature will be a boon to our visually-challenged patrons. Also we subscribed to a few items that we do not have in print. Now patrons can read the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *Financial Times*.

The statistics for 2009 appear to be lower than those for 2008 in the areas of questions and computer assistance. When one looks at the figure for questions on a per day basis, the difference is slight, one a day. In the area of computer assistance, the figure for per day assistance is greater. Optimistically, we can explain the reduction in assistance by stating that the patrons were more adept at computer use in 2009. The number of holds increased, particularly the number of JerseyCat requests. We believe more patrons are aware that we can get things from other libraries. Also, they seem willing to wait for us to get an item for them. In the past we often heard, “I’ll just buy it.” We do not hear that as often in this economy.

We had monthly reference meetings in 2009. This is important for staff communications. It gives us a chance to talk about new things and share information and concerns. We also did several “Databases@9:20” sessions. Staff members attended a variety of meetings and educational sessions during the year. People attended sessions on NoveList and EBSCO. There was a technology day and a program on Labor Resources. Staff also took advantage of the webinars

that several of our database vendors are offering. Mrs. Hipp attended a presentation on Open Source Software and training sessions for Facebook and Twitter for libraries. She was also active as the co-chair of the MAIN Access Committee and attended MAIN Planning Council meetings as its representative. Mary Kennedy and Elaine Galvin, and later Robert Schriek, attended the Demand Management and JerseyCat meetings.

#### TECHNICAL SERVICES – Mary Kennedy, Head

During 2009 we added a total of 5,053 books to the collection. This is an increase of 469 from 2008. We deleted 2,619 books from the collection. This is 895 fewer deletions than in 2008. With this kind of growth, we realize that space will become more of an issue in the coming years. We'll continue to work closely with the dusty book report and circulation statistics to help determine what areas in the collection need the most weeding. In the coming year, we may have to make difficult weeding decisions, particularly in the Mystery and Large Print collections. Now that we have a dry basement and storage space, we may consider placing more books in storage in the event that certain titles are called upon. Another priority area for weeding this coming year will be Social Sciences (300s). The shelves in this area are very crowded, but we still have the bottom shelves to use as an option.

Every year in December, lists of best books of the year are published in the various review journals that we receive. This month we enjoyed reviewing all the various lists and we were pleasantly reassured that we have many, if not all, the notable and certainly best books of the year. The two most popular books this year continued to be Kathryn Stockett's wonderful book titled THE HELP and Dan Brown's THE LOST SYMBOL.

2010 Goals: One of our goals for the collection this year is to develop a more consistent collection development policy for our Biography collection. We find that our biography collection can be a bit confusing for our patrons. Entertainers and athletes have historically been cataloged in their Dewey classification, however, sometimes authors and artists fall into that category as well. Some spine labels contain the person the book is about while others do not. Also, more recently the popularity of memoirs makes cataloging biographies tricky. Sometimes they fall within a particular subject area while others do not. As a result, the appearance of our biography collection is deceiving. It has the tendency to look out-of-date. For example, Andre Agassi's very popular autobiography, OPEN, is split. Half the libraries in the County have it in biographies while the others have it (as we do) 796.342 AGASSI in the tennis section.

We need to continue to explore how new formats of books, such as e-books, will fit into our collection. At this time, our catalog does have a search item for electronic media. We suspect in the coming year this will be addressed as more and more libraries increase their e-book collections.

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