

Gleason Public Library

Gleason Public Library Mission Statement

The Gleason Public Library facilitates life-long learning and growth for all community members through free access to materials and services; collaborative partnerships; and opportunities to engage and learn from one another.

Strategic Plan

In 2019, the Library completed a five-year strategic plan for 2021-2025. A committee consisting of community representatives, Library staff, and Library trustees was assembled to assist in the development of the plan. A public survey was developed to gather feedback on current Library services, to identify which Library services are most important to the Carlisle community, and to gauge interest in a variety of possible new services; the survey received over 300 responses. Based on the results of the survey and brainstorming from the committee, a strategic plan for the Library was prepared. The Library Trustees approved the final plan on September 23, 2019.

The five primary goals identified in the plan are:

1. **SPACE:** Library users find a welcoming physical space that meets their needs for quiet focus, community gathering, work, and learning.
2. **LIFELONG LEARNING:** The library is a center of collaborative education in the community.
3. **AVAILABILITY/ACCESSIBILITY:** The library's programs and resources are available when and where people need them. Information on library services is easily accessible to all users.
4. **SUSTAINABILITY:** The library fosters environmental sustainability in Carlisle.
5. **CELEBRATE READING!**

The Library is greatly indebted to the people of Carlisle for their contributions to the planning process and for their ongoing support of the Library. In particular, the Library is grateful for the participation of the following in the planning meetings: Maxine Crowther, Karen Gettings, Naomi Kablotsky, Karin Kliger, Virginia Lamere, Catherine Mastromarino, David McKay, Jessica Nierenberg, Kate Reid, Christine Stevens, Priscilla Stevens, Thalia Westland, Jane Williams, and facilitator Deb Hoadley.

General Services

GPL maintained a wide-range of established services, including access to 49,000 locally-held books, audiobooks, music CDs, DVDs, magazines, and newspapers, 42,000 downloadable ebooks, e-audiobooks, and downloadable videos, and about three million items via membership in the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC).

Circulation of digital downloads (ebooks, e-audiobooks, and downloadable videos) continued to rise. GPL also provided access to computers, printing, online research databases, and the Internet. In 2019, GPL added the following services and resources:

New Collections/Services:

- Kanopy – A streaming movie service including independent films, documentaries, foreign films, Great Courses, and more.
- Author Alerts – Users can now subscribe to automatic email or text notifications when new releases by their favorite authors are added to the Merrimack Valley system.
- Non-English collections – A collection of Spanish-language books for adults was added, along with Spanish and French-language books for children.
- Overdrive Reciprocal Lending – MVLC joined other Massachusetts libraries in enacting reciprocal lending for Overdrive ebooks and eaudiobooks, providing access to millions of additional titles for Carlisle patrons.

New Equipment/Technology:

- Laptops now available for patrons to borrow and use in-library
- Assistive Hearing Devices² for use at library programs
- Instagram account: [instagram.com/gleasonpubliclibrary](https://www.instagram.com/gleasonpubliclibrary)

Building & Grounds

GPL is fortunate to be housed in a beautiful facility that is well used and well loved by the community. In 2019, regular maintenance and improvements included:

HVAC System: Municipal Facilities Manager Steve Bastek coordinated a significant amount of maintenance to our HVAC system, including replacing filters and cleaning plugged units. In the summer, clogged fan coil units led to water damage in staff room; the wall had to be cut out, mold remediation performed, and wall replaced.

TBA Architects report: The Municipal Facilities Committee commissioned a report by TBA Architects to assess building maintenance/repair needs; a number of recommendations were made, with priorities ranked, that will guide funding requests.

Well: A crack in the well was identified by a camera inspection and sealed in May. Following the repair, nitrate levels were lower than previously measured.

Roof: Several small leaks in the roof were repaired in June.

Love of the Written Word

From story times for young children to book clubs for kids, adults and seniors, GPL fosters a love of reading for all ages. GPL was pleased to offer the following in 2019:

Story Times: Story times were offered for babies through children aged six. Over 50 sessions were attended by about 300 people. Noah's Ark Preschool visited GPL monthly for a story time session. Story times were led by Nicole Claire, Miranda Griffiths, and Tahleen Shamlian.

Book Clubs: A variety of book discussion groups met regularly at the Library, including the Mysterians Book Club (led by library assistant Janet Hentschel) and the Community

Book Club (led by volunteer Mary Zoll) for adults, and book clubs for children in grades 1 through 4 (led by Nicole Claire, Miranda Griffiths and Tahleen Shamlian). The middle school book club (led by Tahleen Shamlian) expanded from grades 5 and 6 to include grades 7 and 8.

Poetry: GPL held its ninth Annual Poetry Contest¹ during National Poetry Month in April. The theme was “Left.” The winners were Alden Cox, Charlie Molten, Gabriel Pereira Duraes, and Kay Hurley. Winning poets were invited to recite their poems at a special poetry reception. The “Reading Poetry Anew” group met monthly to read and discuss poetry, led by Mary Zoll.

Children’s Events & Services

In addition to regular story times, crafts, book discussions, and family movies, the Children’s Department offered a variety of special events in 2019. All events were coordinated by Nicole Claire (January through August) and Miranda Griffiths (October through December), with assistance from Tahleen Shamlian, unless otherwise noted.

Summer Reading: 149 children signed up for this year’s program, themed “A Universe of Stories”, and total participation and attendance at events for all ages was over 800. Reading incentives included a special Book Bingo and Reading Raffle. Summer Reading included educational shows by the Hampstead Stage Company¹, ScienceTellers, and Flying High Frisbee Dogs¹, and musical performances by Jeff Jam¹, Tom Sieling¹, and Rolie Polie Guacamole¹. Craft workshops¹ included Alien Spaceship and Galaxy Slime activities, as well as an origami class. For teens, there was a reading raffle with scratch tickets¹, and for adults, there was a book bingo¹.

35th Annual Pumpkin Spectacle¹: More than 30 pumpkins were entered by students in grades K-4. The event featured spooky stories and shadow puppets by David Mello, followed by a pumpkin contest.

Polar Express Story Time & Party¹: In December the Library hosted its 6th annual Polar Express Story Time. 70 pajama-clad participants and their families listened to a reading of the book, made a craft, posed in a photo booth, and enjoyed seasonal refreshments.

Special Events: Other special events included a Sing-Along with Jeannie Mack¹, Dinoman³, Baby Sign Language¹, Dentist Storytime, Preschool Mindfulness¹, Storytime Yoga¹, Sing to Your Baby with Julie Stepanek¹, Gingerbread Houses¹, and a welcome event¹ for the new Children’s Librarian.

Teen Events & Services

GPL offered a variety of regularly scheduled and special events for Carlisle teens and tweens. Teen and tween events were coordinated by Tahleen Shamlian.

TAB¹: The Teen Advisory Board meets monthly to gather input from local high school students about what they want to see in the Library. The group has helped by volunteering at events such as the Pumpkin Spectacle, Summer Reading, and the Polar

Express Party. The Teens also provided valuable advice on collections and programs most appealing to a teen audience.

Special Events¹: Special events included Henna Tattoos and Henna Alchemy with Mandy Roberge, Teen Painting 101, and Brush Lettering led by CCHS student Claire Sun, and High School Study Nights during exam periods.

Make and Takes¹: A variety of craft workshops were provided after school once each month, including Snowglobes, Painted Pots, Locker Magnets, Pumpkins, and Turkey Lanterns.

Early Release Movies¹: Each month on the Carlisle School's early release day, GPL screened a movie for students in grades 5-8.

Leveling Up: In May, the Gleason presented at an event geared toward rising middle school students and their parents, on the expectations, privileges, and responsibilities of visiting the library and other town areas without parental supervision.

Adult Programs & Events

GPL offered a wide-variety of educational and entertainment events for adults throughout the year. Adult events were coordinated by Martha Feeney-Patten with assistance from the Council on Aging, local organizations, and a variety of volunteers.

Art at the Gleason¹: As part of its mission to provide for the cultural needs of Carlisle's citizens, GPL offers space for art exhibits. These exhibits are curated entirely by volunteers. There were 4 shows in 2019:

- Bedford Arts & Crafts Society Group Exhibit (January-March)
- From Table to Tableau: Landscapes and Floral Art – Mountain Photographs by Bert Willard, Pastels by Cynthia L. Rodday, and Floral Displays and Gardening Information by the Carlisle Garden Club (March-June)
- Carlisle School Student Art Exhibit, featuring art by 4th grade and middle school students, and in the upstairs stairwell, pottery, photography, and painting by CCHS students (June-September)
- Social Fabric by Michele Fandel Bonner and Artistic Mathematics by Thomas Pendock (September-December)

An after-hours Friday evening reception, featuring live music, wine, and snacks, was held for the spring exhibit; others chose Saturday afternoon openings.

Community Conversations²: Community Conversations were held monthly during the school year and featured a variety of topics and local speakers. 2019 topics included: Brain-Healthy Cooking for One, Don't Get Scammed, Decluttering, and Antique Clocks.

Summer Reading¹: For the sixth year, GPL offered a special Book Bingo reading challenge for adults. Participants were encouraged to read books in a variety of genres to enter a raffle for a \$50 restaurant gift certificate.

Cultural Programs: Educator and artist Jane Blair returned to present a three-part lecture series on art^{1,2}; subjects included Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and Alexander Calder. In the fall, cultural and educational lectures^{1,2} included “America at War, 1941-45” with Gary Hylander, “Myth and Religion” with Jason Giannetti, and “American Folk Music” and “Music and the Military” with Richard Travers. Local volunteer Claire Smith continued to present monthly genealogy classes.

Nature & Science Programs: Talks related to science and nature included Paul Sellow of Little Leaf Farm⁴, “Search for the Medusa”, and “Tales from the Home of the World’s Worst Weather”³.

Health & Wellness Programs: GPL partnered with the Carlisle Council on Aging to offer a variety of health and wellness programs in 2019^{1,2}, including “Think positively and live longer and healthier!”, “Oh, Your Aching Joints!”, Oral Health, Integrated Therapies, and Alternative Medicines.

Cookbook Club¹: GPL began offering a Cookbook Club (led by library assistant Emma McKenna), meeting several times over the course of the year to share dishes from selected cookbooks and discuss recipes, cooking, and more.

Stewarding Carlisle’s History

Historic Collections Curation: Janet Hentschel continued to catalog the library’s historic collections into an online database, and presented a class on Preserving Heirlooms and Documents. A portrait of Gleason’s first librarian, Mary Green, was framed and put on display.

Exhibitions: Carlisle resident John Troast curated an exhibition of WWI items related to Carlisle in the spring. In the fall, Janet Hentschel assembled a display of Civil War artifacts at the library, and Gettysburg artifacts were loaned to the Carlisle Historical Society for a display curated by John Troast.

Carlisle Mosquito digitization: GPL tax workers and volunteers scanned thousands of pages to complete the project of digitizing back issues of the Carlisle Mosquito for preservation and public access on the Mosquito website.

Saying Goodbye and New Beginnings

The library was sorry to see the following staff move on: Children’s Librarian Nicole Claire, who resigned in August to resume graduate studies in education; and library assistants Andrea Dollen, Marcus Valenzuela, and Kimberly Money Priddy. The library also mourned the passing of custodian George Collins in February, and retired Children’s Librarian and Assistant Director Marty Seneta in April.

Miranda Griffiths was hired as Children’s Librarian in the fall. Vincent Carfagno, who had been working temporarily as a custodian, was hired permanently in the spring. New library assistants included Helen Lyons, Marie Rice, and Kathleen Taffel.

Two long-time library trustees also left Carlisle in 2019: Steve Golson resigned in May after 8 years on the board; Dale Joachim was appointed as his replacement. In August, Priscilla Stevens resigned and was replaced by Karen Gettings. Stevens had served on the board for a total of more than 12 years between 2004 and 2019.

Support & Collaboration

GPL could not offer the range and quality of services we do without ongoing support from the community as a whole. The Library staff is greatly indebted to the following:

Friends of the Library: FOGPL continue to support GPL by providing funds for special events and services. Donations from 234 members supported a variety of museum passes, many special events, and technology enhancements. Local author Marcella Pixley spoke at the Annual Meeting in November on her upcoming book *Trowbridge Road*. The Friends fundraised through their annual membership drive, book sales in the library foyer, and two “pop-up” book sales, one in February and one on Old Home Day.

Volunteers & Senior Tax Program: In addition to the Friends, dozens of volunteers and tax workers donated their time and energy in 2019. Volunteerism and the involvement of Senior Tax Workers keep GPL rolling by helping with shelving, cleaning, displays, programs, landscaping, marketing, and completion of special projects. Additionally, the Library Trustees and other committees and groups, including the Art at the Gleason Curators, donate countless hours of their time to keep GPL operating. Altogether, over 1300 hours of work were contributed by volunteers, boards, Friends, and Tax Workers.

Library Statistics*

Hours open per week

January—June and September—December:	55
July—August:	51
Items owned by GPL (physical):	49,176
Items owned (downloadable):	42,093
Items provided by other libraries:	14,071
Items provided to other libraries:	23,887
Carlisle patrons:	5,644
Total direct circulation:	76,562
Digital circulation:	7,656
Number of visitors:	71,905
Number of reference transactions:	2,944
Meeting room uses by public:	408
Public computer sessions / wifi sessions:	8060 / 31,862
Number of programs / attendees:	249 / 4,818

Library Staff

Director: Martha Feeney-Patten

Assistant Director/Head of Technology: Jennifer Pike

Children's Librarian: Miranda Griffiths

Teen and Children's/Reference Librarian: Tahleen Shamlian

Reference and Special Collections Librarian: Janet Hentschel

Reference Librarian: Kay Edelberg

Head of Circulation: Deena Scaperotta

Library Assistants: Jenn Buliszak, Linda Dodge (substitute), Leslie Kmiec (substitute),

Helen Lyons, Emma McKenna, Shoba Ramapriya (substitute), Marie Rice, Ellen

Royalty, Kathleen Taffel

Assistant to the Director: Kathryn Untermeyer

Custodians: Dan Brainard, Vincent Carfagno

Library Pages: Sally Duscha, Marisa Ih

Board of Trustees

Christine Stevens, Chair

Term expires 2021

Dale Joachim, Treasurer

Term expires 2020

Karen Gonzalez Gettings, Secretary

Term expires 2020

Submitted by Martha Feeney-Patten, Library Director.

*Circulation and Holdings data is based on FY2019 (July 2018-June 2019) as reported to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Endnotes denote sponsorship/co-sponsorship by the following organizations:

¹Friends of the Gleason Public Library

²Friends of the Carlisle Council on Aging

³Susan Zielinski Natural Science Fund

⁴Carlisle Garden Club