

Joanne L. Lamothe
Director of Library Services

Town of Weymouth
Weymouth Public Libraries

David M. Madden
Mayor

Tufts Library
46 Broad St.
Weymouth, MA 02188
Phone: (781) 337-1402
Fax: (781) 682-6123



75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189

781-335-2000
781-331-5124 (TTY)

I am providing a snapshot of one day's activities at the Tufts Library in Weymouth, Massachusetts, the main branch of the Weymouth Public Libraries, to emphasize the importance of how state funding affects one library in one community during a typical day, Monday, October 1, 2007.

7:30 a.m.

9 interlibrary loan bins containing 270 items of interlibrary loans are delivered to the loading dock of the library. These books, audio and visual materials represent materials borrowed by our library patrons from other libraries and materials being returned which had been lent to library users in other communities. Made possible by funding through Line 9506 Library Technology and Resource Sharing benefiting the Old Colony Library Network infrastructure and Line 9401, which funds SEMLS, our regional library system and the coordinator of our delivery system.

10:00 am

38 Infants and Toddlers attended our Mother Goose Storytime with their caregivers. This program promotes early literacy and the value of libraries to our youngest library patrons and their families. Made possible by funding through Line 9401 State Aid to Public Libraries that funds programs and events at the library.

10:30 am

23 senior citizens listened to a panel discussion addressing issues such as housing, health care and investment issues. The library promoted this event and provided additional resources via our web page, made possible by funding received through the State Aid to Public Libraries program.

5:00 pm

One staff member departs for her evening class at the University of Rhode Island where she is enrolled in the Masters of Library and Information Science program. Upon completion of this class she will receive tuition reimbursement as outlined in the library's staff collective bargaining agreement, which is funded through Line 9401 State Aid to Public Libraries.

7pm

48 people listen to Steve Puleo, author of "The Boston Italians" discuss the Italian immigration experience in the city of Boston. Mr. Puleo is informative and engaging and remains to speak individually to attendees and to sign books. Made possible by funding through the State Aid to Public Libraries program.

These specific events provide educational opportunities to citizens of Weymouth of varying demographics and indicate the library as a true community center. They do not, however, reflect the day-to-day activities of patrons using our public access computers to access databases provided by the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners or the regional library system. Nor am I providing you with data on how many people utilized the Old Colony Network to download an audio book, view the library's on-line calendar, reserve a museum pass through our automated reservation system, send a reference email question, research a homework assignment, email a resume or to simply check out a book.

Locally, fixed costs including pension fund contributions, employee benefits employer taxes, workers compensation, special education funding, debt service and casualty insurance continue to rise while revenues from new growth, levy limit increases and state aid decline. The library struggles to meet our own fixed costs of network membership assessments that have risen since the devastating cuts to funding for Resource Sharing across Commonwealth's automated library networks. We continue to struggle locally with this burden. Our technology backbone is woefully overburdened and yet funding has not met the need for services in the area. Increased funding in State Aid to Public Libraries will enable our public libraries to fulfill their missions as community centers, lifelong learning centers and the premier arena for social discourse in our communities.

Increased funding as indicated in the Board of Library Commissioners preliminary legislative agenda for FY2009 is critical for the survival of the Commonwealth's public libraries. I respectfully request your thoughtful consideration of how funding on the state level can have such an impact by showing you a snapshot of one day in one public library in Massachusetts. This "Day in the Life" is repeated each and every day across the Commonwealth in libraries of all sizes. I am especially grateful, as is the entire library community, to Governor Patrick for this public hearing to enable libraries to tell their stories.

Sincerely,

Joanne L. Lamothe
Director of Library Services