

# Annual Report of the GUILDERLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY www.guilpl.org

## Guilderland's Gathering Place

For the Guilderland Public Library, 2009 was a year of ever-increasing usage, celebrations of our regional history, and looking to the future. Circulation, the amount of materials being loaned was up 4.5% over the previous year, far above our population growth. The celebration's theme was "Explore New York's Roots & Rhythms;" it focused on the Quadricentennial of Henry Hudson's voyage up his eponymous river as well as Samuel de Champlain's exploration of northern New York.

*This Annual Report features patrons' comments about the Library.*



This year-long celebration was a rousing success. Programs, concerts, special events, and an appearance by "Henry" himself delighted adults and children alike, and offered an opportunity to understand the central role our area played in settling the continent.

As the year opened, financial markets were still in a state of uncertainty, so the Library Board and Administration took a conservative approach to programming and operations. Also, the Board voted to suspend activities related to the possible expansion of the Library. In that same vein, the Board commissioned a representative market survey to evaluate the attitudes of town residents towards the Library. A summary of that survey is included in this report. But these are just a fraction of the activities at GPL. Here are some other major accomplishments of 2009:

### New Services

**TumbleBooks:** Last spring the Youth Services department introduced this new online service that helps children learn to read. This online collection of animated, talking picture books is teaching kids the joys of reading in a format they love.

**Facebook and twitter:** The popularity of these two services exploded during 2009. For some time the communication channels of younger generations, they suddenly became mainstream. In mid-year, the Library complemented its Internet presence with

*I check out books and picture books and audio books, too.*

both a twitter service (@GuilderlandLib) and a Facebook site to enable town residents of every age and technological savvy to stay abreast of Library programs and services. Both channels quickly gained a following.



A young patron meets "Henry Hudson" during a Quadricentennial celebration.

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AT YOUR LIBRARY

**Email:** The Library also established “Library eNews Alerts” in the fall. This opt-in service enables patron to get advance notification of the types of programs (adults, family, children’s, etc.) they’re interested in. (If you have not signed up yet, visit [www.guilpl.org](http://www.guilpl.org) to do so.)

*I use the computers, read magazines, take out audio books, look at some of the educational things. I use the broad scope of the Library.*

## Community and Cultural Activities

**Disney Family Fridays:** This proved to be immensely popular. Starting in July, we turned the Helderberg Room into a family-friendly movie theater; every Friday through the end of August we



Library Director Barbara Nichols Randall welcomes young moviegoers – who were invited to sit down front – to a Disney Family Friday feature.

showed a series of movies ranging from *Pinocchio* to *101 Dalmatians*. It was such a success that we did another series from September to November ... and we’re doing it again in summer 2010!

*I borrow books and videos. I have two children that go there all the time.*

**Remembering 1969:** It had been 40 years since the “Age of Aquarius” and the events that significantly influenced American life. We ran four programs, including a book discussion and a concert by the Capital Pride Singers, to celebrate this cultural shift.

**Summer Sizzlers:** Answering the question, “What’s your favorite summer read?” we invited patrons to submit reviews of their top choices, and then posted them on our website. Local businesses donated prizes for randomly selected reviewers. This, too, was such a success; we’ll have a similar program in 2010.

**Family Fun Day:** First held in 2008, this activity was reprised in 2009 and was even more popular the second time around. On a very warm, sunny August Saturday, we had

*I look over everything they advertise and display. And attend some of the different music programs.*

activities that kept kids entertained and adults amused. It’s now a regular annual event.



A young patron enjoying a SnoCone during Family Fun Day.

## Learning Issues

**Literacy Training:** The Library, in cooperation with Literacy New York: Greater Capital Region, began recruiting volunteers to become tutors in English for Speakers of Other Languages or Basic Literacy. While training did not start until spring 2010, the early jump into the recruiting effort yielded a sizable group of dedicated volunteers.

## Health and Wellness

**Fit for Life:** The Library continued its grant-funded fitness program targeted to every age, babies to seniors. These programs ranged from Wii-Fitness for Adults to Great Ways to Increase Your Exercise Output. These programs were run with help from the Capital District YMCA, the MetLife foundation, and the Upper Hudson Library System.



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**Consumer Health Information:** From Friends and Family CPR, and Memory and Aging, to Mammography Van visits, nearly a dozen health-related programs were held to give the community access to current health information.

## Supportive Services

**Homebound Services:** The Library continued its delivery of books and other materials to homebound and older adult patrons. This program brings the Library to patrons who cannot otherwise take advantage of its programs. In 2009, we were able to increase our outreach by 46%.

## Business Activities and Assistance

**Small Business Workshops:** From all the small operational details that help a business succeed, to locating sources of funding, there's a lot that new or soon-to-be small business owners need to know, and that's why we again hosted the Small Business Workshop series. They were held in cooperation with the Guilderland Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Institute.

*I took a defensive driving course through AARP.*

## Special Events

**Carol J. Hamblin Notable Author Speakers Series:** Bob Mankoff, Cartoon Editor of *The New Yorker* magazine, delighted a December evening audience with his "A Brief History of Humor" author talk, a fascinating look at what makes a good *New Yorker* cartoon. This event was held, as were previous well-attended Notable Author events for Joyce Carol Oates, Jeff Shaara, Ela Stein Weissberger, and Will Moses, in the Main Reading Room. This necessitated closing the Library early to transform the Reading Room into an auditorium.



Bob Mankoff, Cartoon Editor for *The New Yorker* magazine, speaks at the Library in December 2009 as part of the Carol J. Hamblin Notable Author Speakers series.

## Fundraising Efforts

**Better Book Sales:** The Friends of the Library hit upon a recipe for success: Better Books Sales, held on the Second Saturday of every month. Each of these sales has brought in hundreds of dollars that go to support programs and furnishings not funded by taxpayer dollars. The Friends continue to sell used books in the Library's Book Nook; between these two efforts, the Friends have made major contributions to the Library.

**Shredding on Saturdays:** Once every three months, the Guilderland Library Foundation holds a "Shreddy Day" when patrons can bring old personal papers to the Library to be sliced and diced. Proceeds from this effort has enabled the Foundation to support the Notable Author series.

*I use the computer, get tax forms, and check out books.*

*I bring the grandkids for the children's specials.*

## Policy Changes

As part of the 2009-2010 budgeting process, the Board of Trustees established an annual \$25 fee for non-library district resident patrons. More than 300 such patrons took advantage of this program to assure full-service

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use of the Library. This policy was undertaken because town residents who live within the Library District (the same borders as the Guilderland Central School District) were underwriting non-district patrons who pay no taxes to support the Library.

## Listening to You

**Community Survey:** In the fall, the Board used a portion of budgeted planning money to hire Fact Finders, a consumer research firm in Guilderland, to conduct a community wide-survey and follow-up focus groups to gauge community feeling about the Library's services and to gain insight into residents' feelings about a possible expansion.

The results were enlightening. In 2003 we had conducted a similar survey, and the increase in community satisfaction with the library was marked. This survey revealed that 91% of persons surveyed felt the Library is doing an excellent or good job in serving the community. As to the question of a possible expansion, respondents favored the idea by a 2-to-1 margin. To read the full survey, visit [www.guilpl.org/about/survey](http://www.guilpl.org/about/survey).

## About this Annual Report

This report is prepared for the Guilderland community. If you'd like to view the official Statistical Annual Report we file with the State of New York, visit [www.guilpl.org/about/statistics](http://www.guilpl.org/about/statistics).

## HOW THE GUILDERLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY IS FUNDED

The Guilderland Public Library is chartered by the Regents of the State of New York as a school district public library. This means that 91% of our funding is provided by the property owners of the Guilderland Central School District.

### **We receive NO funding from:**

- The Town of Guilderland
- Albany County
- The Federal government
- Local sales taxes

New York State grants each chartered library between \$.28 – \$.35 per citizen (based on the 1990 census); this amounts to \$8,500 – or 0.27% – of our budget this fiscal year. We raise the remaining 9% of our annual budget through fees, grants, donations, and other sources of fundraising.

Many people did not know how the Library was funded, so staff created this small flyer to explain.

*I attend events and use the computers.*



*"I came here to do some research, so I'm educating myself. I couldn't find what I was looking for; I had to ask for help. [The Librarian] was wonderful. She showed me how to do the search, and then found the information for me. Then she even printed it out for me."*  
– Boyd A.

*"My child and I come to the Library at least twice a week. We go to the registered storytime on Tuesday, and then we come to the Storytime on Thursday. We read books, take books out of the Library, and use the computers. We frequently ask the Librarians questions about books and videos; the staff here is very helpful."*  
– Christy D.

