

# Lower Merion

# Loves Its Libraries

## Citizen Survey:

In the fall of 2016, Lower Merion Township contracted with the National Research Center, in collaboration with the International City/County Management Association, to conduct the National Citizen Survey in Lower Merion.

The survey showed that public libraries in the Township were both heavily used and well regarded by residents.

## LOWER MERION LIBRARY SYSTEM

75 E Lancaster Ave.

Ardmore, PA 19003

[www.lmls.org](http://www.lmls.org)

Phone: 610-645-6110

Email: [info@lmls.org](mailto:info@lmls.org)

92% Positive

Percent of Lower Merion Residents With Positive Approval Ratings of Lower Merion Libraries

71% Participate

Percent of Lower Merion Households That Have Visited a Lower Merion Library in the Last Year



# Under Construction

## Ardmore Library Reopens

On January 4, 2016, the library reopened after a year-long renovation. The new design features:

- ADA-compliant elevator to accommodate disabled patrons and children in strollers
- Quiet reading and study area in the refurbished loft
- Circulation desk with self-checkout station to enable faster checkout
- Young adult nook with comfortable seating
- Renovated program room to increase the flexibility in scheduling activities
- Private conference room for small group (8 people) meetings
- Soft play area for toddlers



## Penn Wynne Library Reopens

The library reopened on March 20, 2016, after a 14-month extensive renovation. The library now includes:

- An additional 1,608 square feet
- Handicapped accessible meeting room on first floor
- More public computers and more tables and chairs for library users
- Expanded children's area with a larger display area and more shelving
- ADA-compliant restrooms with diaper changing facilities
- Skylights and natural lighting, with seating all around the perimeter of the library
- An automatic front door, and book drops open all day
- New shelving, carpet and paint, and efficient heating and air conditioning
- Installation of self-check and RFID technology



## Construction Begins at the Gladwyne Library

The library closed on January 15, 2016, for renovation and updates. (It reopened on March 25, 2017.)

The renovation features:

- A glass elevator linking the basement children's room and the 2nd floor meeting room with the main library
- ADA-compliant restrooms for the public and staff
- An expanded and colorful section for young adults
- Reorganization of audio-visual materials
- Updated staff workspace
- Installation of self-check and RFID technology



# Library Updates

## **Ardmore**

Ardmore Library ushered in 2016 open and ready for business. Patrons are delighted with the repurposed space, improved lighting and quiet reading and study loft. We welcomed 64,317 visitors and recorded 9,763 Internet logins. The children's department presented 99 story times for 2,909 children and 45 special programs, including LEGO Fest, Christmas Craft Week and the Teddy Bear Tea Party. Children played 2,777 educational games on the Early Learning Station. Adult programming included the annual Jane Austen Celebration, the 1st Wednesday Book Club and three local author visits. The Board of Trustees hosted the Recipe for Renovation Kitchen Tour (the library's major fundraiser), the Charlotte Miller Simon Poetry Celebration (with 400 entries) and the annual fund drive. Finally, the Board raised \$200,000 for the Capital Campaign.

## **Belmont Hills**

Belmont Hills Library lived up to its "small but mighty" reputation in 2016. We welcomed nearly 32,000 patrons through our doors, and ran 89 programs. We tried new and fun events, such as a Bake-Off, and the educational Paoli Battlefield Lecture, along with the crowd pleasers such as The Hilarious Magic of Sam Sandler. A great success was the Boos and Brews for Books at the West Laurel Hill Cemetery. There is always a delightful experience at the Belmont Hills Library: whether it's grabbing the latest book or DVD, hopping onto our café style wireless network, or visiting with our friendly staff members, chances are you'll be glad you stopped by. The library continues to look forward and plan for its long-awaited renovation.

## **Gladwyne**

2016 was a very different kind of year for the Gladwyne Free Library, as the renovation/elevator project became a reality. With the award of a \$500,000 Commonwealth Libraries Keystone Grant for ADA improvements firmly in hand, the Library closed to the public on January 15, 2016. After the collections moved off-site to the Processing Center, and staff were redeployed to the other five libraries, the building was turned over to the contractor, Circle3; the journey to install improvements, including a new elevator and restroom upgrades to become ADA-accessible commenced. The much anticipated reopening occurred on March 25, 2017.

## **Bala Cynwyd**

With circulation of 292,835 items and 153,874 visitors, 2016 was a very successful year for BCL. Emphasizing programs, BCL had 12,093 children, young adults, and adults attending 299 programs. BCL presented adult programs such as: Sundays @2 Concerts, Great Books, author talks, gardening programs, write-ins, college admissions, juvenile justice and local history presentations. Children's programs included Story Time, activity box, monthly crafts, Kidzart, Global Tots dance program, Sciencetellers and more. The new Junior Room game and toy program saw patrons signing out 5,771 toys/games. From proctoring tests, helping with ebook and audiobook downloads, Summer Reading, social media library posts, an active volunteer program, to BCL Board of Trustees Fund Drive efforts to raise money for new materials, BCL worked continuously to make the library a better place for community enjoyment.

## **Ludington**

There was much to celebrate at Ludington Library in 2016—it was our 100<sup>th</sup> birthday after all! We celebrated in style at Bryn Mawr Day. We also took a moment to appreciate our 100 years of service. We show no signs of slowing down, we welcomed over 250,000 patrons, we checked out over 470,000 items, and our 499 programs, including our 2nd annual Craft Fair, continued to be the talk of the town with nearly 17,000 stopping by to check us out. 2016 was a great year at Ludington, and here's to 100 more!

## **Penn Wynne**

2016 was an exciting and busy year: the renovations were completed, the new furniture arrived, the books came back, and so did the Penn Wynne community! The library hosted 130 programs for all ages and 43 story times for 1,228 children and caregivers. There were 55 other children's programs, everything from a petting zoo to LEGO days to music and dance programs with an attendance of 2,123 children. 855 patrons attended the 28 adult programs, which varied from art lessons to stress reduction through mindfulness to creating your own essential oils and everything in between. Public computers had 2,666 sign-ups and 2,376 people used our wireless Internet connection. Children played 1,474 educational games on our Early Literacy Station. Everyone agrees the library renovation was worth the wait!



# LMLS By the Numbers

## Circulation:

982,665 books and other items were lent. That's 16.9 per resident, more than twice the national average (7.54) and three times the Pennsylvania average (5.34).

## Library Visits:

495,451 people visited LMLS locations. That's 8.6 times per resident, compared to 4.64 nationally and 3.60 in Pennsylvania.

## Registered Borrowers:

41,838 residents have library cards. That's 74% of Lower Merion residents, compared to 56% nationally and 43% in Pennsylvania.

## Other Stats:

📖 54,818 public computer sessions    📖 42,074 wifi sessions  
📖 937 programs for children & young adults, with 34,242 attendees  
📖 13,595 hours open    📖 78,605 reference questions answered

## Financial Summary\*

### Income:

Lower Merion Township:	\$4,226,956
State Aid:	\$196,930
Fines & Donations:	\$583,099
Total:	\$5,006,985

### Expenses:

Personnel:	\$3,668,045
Library Materials:	\$639,827
Other Expenses:	\$652,435
Total:	\$4,960,307

\*Preliminary report, unaudited.

## System-Wide Services and Events

In 2016, LMLS made several system-wide changes, everything from personnel to technology.

- Long-time Director of Libraries Christine Steckel retired and David Belanger was hired to fill the position. Also hired was Adam Haigh as the Technology Librarian.
- The One Book One Lower Merion committee scored a hit with the selection of *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead as its community reading title.
- Ardmore, Ludington, Gladwyne, and Penn Wynne joined Bala Cynwyd and Belmont Hills in easy access wifi, eliminating the need for a cumbersome log-in process.
- Mobile printing was added to libraries; you can now print from your laptop, smartphone or tablet to library public computers.
- A new web page was developed for LMLS, increasing ease of access to library information and electronic resources.
- LMLS increased its presence on social media.
- 64 public access computers were replaced.
- A strategic planning process was begun to facilitate progress.
- The Office of Commonwealth Libraries, using Library Service and Technology Act funds, provided LMLS libraries with the Play-K program and the Ludington Library received the Block Party and Leap Into Science grants.