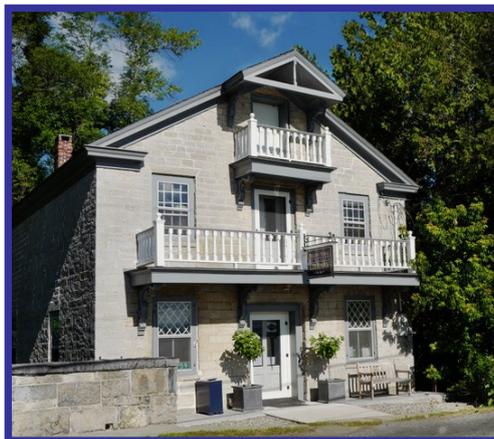


# Belden Noble Memorial Library Newsletter

Fall / Winter 2025

2759 Essex Road  
P.O. Box 339 Essex, New York 12936  
beldennoblelibrary@gmail.com  
518-963-8079



**Please note:**

The library will be closed for the holidays on:  
November 27, 28, and 29  
December 25, 26, and 27



Our popular Silent Auction begins Wednesday, November 19. Please see page 4 for information on how to donate and how to place your bids.

## May 1 to Sep 30

Mon. 2 pm to 4 pm  
Tues. 2 pm to 4 pm  
Wed. 11 am to 4 pm  
Thurs. 11am to 4 pm  
Fri. 11 am to 4 pm  
Sat. 11am to 4 pm  
Sun. closed

## Oct 1 to Apr 30

Mon. closed  
Tues. closed  
Wed. 11 am to 4 pm  
Thurs. 11 am to 4 pm  
Fri. 11am to 4 pm  
Sat. 11 am to 4 pm  
Sun. closed

Our Library Director and Library Assistant manage the library on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The library is staffed by volunteers at other times.

**Belden Noble Memorial Library is an association library operated by our Board of Trustees:**

**President**  
Joyce Sukel

**Vice President**  
Maureen Ecclesine

**Treasurer**  
Maureen DeLaughter

**Secretary**  
Kathy Nadire

**Corresponding Secretary**  
Sally Minich Prosk

**Board Members**  
Tom Mangano  
John Noble  
Jani Spurgeon



The Library board and staff say a reluctant and fond farewell to Colleen and Jim Van Hoven as they leave Essex after many years to be closer to family.

Jim was not on the library board, but may as well have been as he donated so much of his time organizing and presenting programs such as the very popular Meet Your Neighbors series, which we hope to continue. He also created the 'Essex Wall of Literary Fame' - contacting more than 25 local Essex authors, organizing their biographies into a book, and framing their photographs, which now hang at the library. He collected their books as well to add to the library's Local Authors section.

Jim and Colleen were instrumental in writing a New York State Library Construction grant in 2016, without which the upstairs Children's Room and Reading Room would not exist. The grant allowed us to double the useable space of the library.

Colleen was a fearless advocate for the library during her many, many years as president of the Library Board. She was on many non-profit boards in Essex but the library was special to her. Her contributions to the resilience of the library came not just from big projects like writing grants, helping to organize fundraisers, keeping the library functional during Covid, and dealing with the "Great Tree Incident"; she was also always happy to help with the little projects - stuffing envelopes, dressing in her PJs for an evening story time, and shaking the donation basket to remind patrons at our programs that we could use the support!

Colleen's most valuable talent, and the reason we will miss her most of all, was the way she guided the library board with a firm hand, and a great sense of humor. The fact that so many have stayed on the board for so many years was very much due our enjoyment working with her.

Colleen guided the library through some tough times and we want our patrons to know how valuable her and Jim's contributions, both financial and in donated time, have been to the community, but especially to the Belden Noble Memorial Library. At a farewell dinner, the library board presented Colleen and Jim with a plaque that now hangs in the library. It reads:

**Colleen and Jim Van Hoven, In Sincere Appreciation for All They Have Done To Make The Belden Noble Library The Heart Of Our Community.**

Truer words were never written! - The Library Board and Staff



We send occasional e-mail notices to let our patrons know what's happening at the library. While our print newsletters are sent only twice a year, our e-mail messages, with all the latest news about upcoming programs, new additions to the collection and other library news are sent out once or twice a month. Don't miss out on the latest library news. Contact us with your e-mail address so we can add you to our list.

## Notes from our Director and Assistant



It has been a busy but fun and productive few months since I started at the library! Thanks to everyone who has stopped by to introduce themselves, make suggestions for programs, or challenged my mastery of the library computer system!

In the last few months, we have held some fantastic children's programs, wrapped up our summer Meet Your Neighbors series (stay tuned for next season's lineup!), and started planning for ways to keep people engaged and connected throughout the winter, whether in person at the library or at home using our online services. Check out our pictures of recent programs.

I've been doing a lot of thinking recently about what a library should be in 2025 (spoiler alert: I haven't found the answer yet). Here's what I do know: 1) It's not just a physical space. Books, magazines, and other published media are available in so many formats, and we want to help you access them.

2) It's all about community. Ultimately, we are here to serve the people of Essex and surrounding areas, whether that is through recommending your next read, providing important information, creating engaging programming, or just giving you a cozy place to read quietly or be around other people. 3) It's past, present, and future. The Belden Noble Memorial Library is integral to the history of this hamlet, as Adeline Noble reminds me daily from her perch on the wall. I am honored to be entrusted with this chapter of its existence!

If you haven't already, please stop by and say hello! I promise that my skills with the search function have improved over the last few months!

-Sydney Estey-Dedell, Library Director



Weekly visits to the library with my mother were a special treat and instilled a love for books and the special structures that housed them. That love has never left me. I am excited to be part of the team here at Belden Noble Library. My heart is particularly drawn to teens. I taught Junior High English and worked for the Youth Advocate Program. I am looking forward to helping to increase resources, aides and attractions to entice our local preteens and teens to their library.

-Marty Stratton, Library Assistant

## Welcome New Board Members!

We are happy to have two new board members joining us this fall – John Noble and Tom Mangano!

John's roots in Essex are deep. As the great-great nephew of Belden Noble, John has been spending part of every year in Essex since childhood. He spent most of his professional life in higher education as a career center director at Harvard (his alma mater), Duke University, and Williams College. Prior to that time he worked as an editor in the educational publishing industry and taught at several independent schools. He is also featured on our Wall of Literary Fame.



Following a career as technical editor at GE Research in Schenectady, Tom became director of Belden Noble Memorial Library in 2011. In this role, he led the project to automate the library with the support of the Board, additional volunteers, and CEF librarians. As director, he enjoyed interacting with patrons, building the collection, and arranging library programs. Tom retired in December 2019 and now looks forward to supporting the library as a Board member.

## In Other News...



Did you know that you have access to online streaming of movies and shows, digital books, digital magazines, audiobooks, and more through your library card? Visit [cefls.org](http://cefls.org) and click "Read and Stream" for tutorials on how to access these services. You can also call or stop in for help!



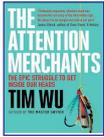
There are many ways you can support your library! Donate your time or expertise by volunteering at the circulation desk, leading a program, or helping with fundraising drives! If you have an idea for a donation, email us at [beldennoblelibrary@gmail.com](mailto:beldennoblelibrary@gmail.com)  
WE THANK YOU!

The Essex parking lot is getting a makeover! Look at [essexnewyork.com](http://essexnewyork.com) for more information.

Check out the PBS Documentary *Free for All: The Public Library*. This documentary tells the story of the quiet revolutionaries who made a simple idea happen. From the pioneering women behind the "Free Library Movement" to today's librarians who serve the public despite a contentious age of closures and book bans, meet those who created a civic institution where everything is free and the doors are open to all. There will be a screening at the Plattsburgh Public Library on Saturday, November 22, or you can stream it on PBS.



## What The Library Board And Staff Are Reading

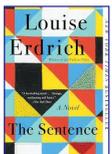


**The Attention Merchants by Tim Wu.** This is a very readable, interesting book about the ways in which our society gets and uses our attention. It has made me think about how much time we spend with all forms of media and how that time is a commodity benefitting others. -Kathy Nadire



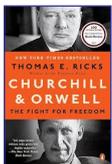
**Sprout Street Neighbors by Anna Alter.** As a parent of young children, I find that I spend more time with that genre than anything else. This gentle three-book series documents the adventures of five friends and neighbors. It leads us through their very human challenges (even if they themselves aren't quite human!) with humor, kindness, and teachable moments. -Sydney Estey-Dedell

**Adirondack Enigma: The Depraved Intellect & Mysterious Life of North Country Wife Killer Henry Debosnys by Cheri Farnsworth.** Appropriate to the season, I just finished this book. The murder took place in our home town of Essex and received national attention in the New York Times. -John Noble



**Waiting for the Monsoon by Rod Nordland.** Nordland recounts his many decades as a war correspondent in every war from Vietnam through Afghanistan. He interweaves stories of the many life-threatening situations he encountered during his career while documenting his current personal battle with a deadly brain tumor. -Maureen DeLaughter

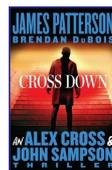
**The Sentence by Louise Erdrich.** This master storyteller weaves the experiences of Native Americans during the peak of COVID with universal yet personal struggles. The gritty realities of tragedy, hope, and rebuilding lives keep the reader connected to the main character's success. -Marty Stratton



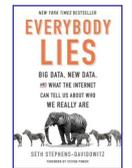
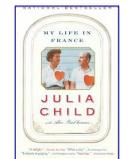
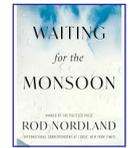
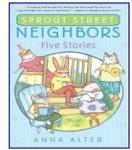
**My Life in France by Julia Child.** This memoir is tasty with Julia's take on life. Sometimes she and her fresh herbs join me in the kitchen. Yum. - Sally Minich-Prosk

**Churchill and Orwell: The Fight for Freedom by Thomas E. Ricks** This dual biography covers the parallel lives of Winston Churchill and George Orwell, showing how each man confronted authoritarianism and defended the principles of democracy. It reminds the reader that the threat of authoritarianism did not end in the 20th Century. -Tom Mangano

**Everybody Lies: Big Data, New Data, and What the Internet Can Tell Us About Who We Really Are by Seth Stephens-Davidowitz.** A Harvard-trained economist, and former Google data scientist, uses new data from the internet to reveal the truth of questions that many people lie about. For example, truths about hate and prejudice. - Jani Spurgeon



**Cross Down by James Patterson and Brendan DuBois.** is another Alex Cross and John Sampson thriller. As a shadow force advances on the nation's Capital, Sampson alone must protect the Cross family and his own. - Joyce Sukul



Johnny Gray and Christine Burke talked about their time in Essex at the final Meet Your Neighbors event of the season.



We offered 4 different programs in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension. Here some of our youngest patrons learn how to make butter.

Here are just a few photos of the programs we hosted recently at the library. Have an idea for a library program? We'd love your suggestions. Contact us at [beldenoblelibrary@gmail.com](mailto:beldenoblelibrary@gmail.com)

### Coming this winter!

Holiday Crafts for Kids during Holidays in Essex on December 13

Books, books, books! We're eager to get our book clubs off the ground again! Join in person or remotely

"The American Revolution" documentary series screening party and discussion

Events for pre-teens and teens: we're excited to be partnering with local organizations to expand opportunities for this age group

Follow our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/bnmlibrary> to learn more details about programs!



As the nights get longer and darker, David Tisdale is lifting our spirits by showing classic musicals. Contact the library or follow our Facebook page to find out what's playing.



Sally Minich-Prosk leading children in creative drama in her "Stories Alive!" We thank the Community church for welcoming us into their undercroft for our creative drama program.



Petey the Snake and Rinda the Good Witch captivating children at the Haunted Hamlet.

### Our Annual Silent Auction begins November 19

We are busily gathering donations and getting ready for this year’s Silent Auction to benefit the library. Beginning November 19, come to the library any time to pick up your secret bidding ID number and start bidding on items. The auction will be open during our regular hours, Wednesdays-Saturdays 11:00-4:00. The auction will close with a bang during Holidays in Essex on Saturday, December 13.



For anyone who can’t bid in person, the items will be available to browse on our Website at <https://essexlibrary.org/auction>

Bid over the phone by calling us at 518-936-8079, or by email at [beldennoblelibrary@gmail.com](mailto:beldennoblelibrary@gmail.com). We will hold any items you win until you are able to claim them.

Those interested in donating an item or a basket for the auction are asked to call or e-mail the library. We will be happy to pick up items, should that be needed. Popular items in the past have been snack baskets, gift cards to local businesses, artwork, new children’s toys and books, antiques and collectibles, coffee, tea or wine baskets, and handmade crafts.



These three Christmas themed drawings by Sid Couchey, donated by library patrons Martha and Tom McGraw, will be in the auction.



Visit our Auction Web page at <https://essexlibrary.org/auction> to see what we have for you to bid on this year. We will be updating that page with gift cards, baskets and other interesting items as they are received. Bidding begins on November 19.

Keith Prosch is busy creating a beautiful blanket chest (hope chest?) for our auction.



As 2025 nears an end, please consider making a donation to the library, either via an item or basket for our Silent Auction or a financial contribution, or both, if you are able. The Town of Essex gives the library \$14,000 each year. While we are very thankful this grant, it does not come close to covering the costs to keep the library doors open. We are a non-profit organization, but we have all the bills of a for-profit business. The costs to run the library include salaries, Medicare and Social Security payments, electric, fuel oil, sewer/water, phone, wifi, the required liability, workers compensation, disability and family leave insurances, cleaning costs, postage, office supplies, programs, books, magazines and digital materials to name a few. Our bare-bones budget is about \$50,000 per year. All funding over and above what we receive from the Town comes partly from our fundraising events such as the Silent Auction and book sale, but mostly our funding comes from you, our generous patrons, and you have ALWAYS come through for us. We hope you will think of the library this year as you are making your annual donations. Thank you!

**Please Support Your Library!**

**Yes, I want to help our library continue to grow and provide the best possible library services for Essex!**

**Volunteer!** The Belden Noble Library could not function without its volunteers. We will do our best to match your talents with one of the many jobs available. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Make a tax deductible contribution and keep good things happening at your library.**

**Join the 125 CLUB by donating \$125 in recognition of the library’s 125th anniversary and get a free tote!**

**Make a financial contribution of any amount.**

**Donate Stocks, Bonds, and/or Mutual Funds.** You can donate stocks, bonds, and mutual funds directly to the library. When you donate stock to charity, you’ll generally take a tax deduction for the full fair market value. And because you are donating stock, your contribution and tax deduction may instantly increase over 20%. The same benefits apply for bonds and mutual funds.

**Make provisions for the Library in your estate plans.** If you have already made a provision for the Library in your estate plans and have not yet informed us, or would like more information about this charitable gesture, please contact the library.

**Please make checks payable to Belden Noble Memorial Library and send to P.O. Box 339, Essex, NY 12936, or you can return this form in person at the library.** Yes, charitable donations will help your library!  
*As an official 501(c)3 organization, we are eligible for matching gifts.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_