



Indispensable ATHENEUM

ATHENEUM.

~ *A philanthropic opportunity
of urgent importance*

For the sake of the island we love

If you have chosen to make Nantucket your home, whether it's just for the summer or all year round, chances are there are two contradictory qualities you love about the island.



Indispensable



FIRST, YOU LOVE the power of Nantucket's wild beauty, the way being here makes the challenges and stress of everyday life seem to melt away. A tiny historic island, separated from the mainland by 30 empty miles of ocean, Nantucket is a place apart. It's tranquility. It's heaven.

And yet, at the same time, you're smack in the middle of a vibrant community with loads of opportunities to experience high-quality artistic and intellectual offerings, and to interact with new ideas, cutting-edge knowledge, and diverse community members. All available for free to absolutely everyone.

It's a remarkable combination—the beauty and peace of this remote island together with the cultural and educational riches of a thriving urban center.

The indispensable Nantucket Atheneum brings these opposing yet somehow compatible sides of the island together, making Nantucket unlike anyplace else.

And who does the entire population of the island rely on to make sure the Atheneum is here, year after year, doing this important job?

Who is indispensable to the Atheneum's future? *You are.*



≈ But here's the problem

Sometimes we feel misunderstood. Let us take a moment to set the record straight.

People assume that because we're a public library we're mainly funded by the government. It's an easy mistake to make. Most public libraries are.

But the Atheneum isn't like other libraries. Since 1834, when Charles Coffin and David Joy sold shares (at \$10 each) for the purchase of the Universalist Church building in the center of town to house a membership library, the Atheneum has been privately owned and supported — with very little funding from government sources.

And yet, since 1900, when the Atheneum members voted to make it a public library, we've been open, accessible, and free to all.

So, with just a small portion of our expenses funded by the town and state, how do we offer over 1,300 educational and cultural programs each year, access to computers, technology and research assistance, and an enormous collection of over 1.6 million books, DVDs, magazines and information resources from all over the world?

With limited public funding, how do we keep the lights on and the boiler going?

What does indispensable look like?

Let us show you. Come with us on a tour of a typical day—early morning through lights-off—at the Atheneum.



9:30 a.m.

Story Time in the Weezie Library for Children

A lifesaver for parents. As one mom explains, "The Atheneum has saved me over the years with my children. I can't imagine life in winter without it, because everything else closes."

The answer is you. We depend on generous people like you, who care deeply about the life and vibrancy of the Nantucket community, all year round. We exist thanks to your philanthropy.

Here's what many Nantucket residents simply don't realize...


Private donations pay for the lion's share — fully 75% — of the cost of keeping the Atheneum's doors open. And that proportion is increasing as time goes on.

 10:10 a.m.

Atheneum To Go

If patrons can't travel to us, we bring the Atheneum to them. Here, Gillian — from our circulation department — heads out to make her weekly deliveries of books and DVDs to the homebound.



 9:48 a.m.

Learning the basics while his big sister is at Story Time.

This little guy got his introduction to reading when he was barely an hour old, thanks to our **Welcome Baby** program. Every single baby born at Nantucket hospital receives a gift bag containing his very first book—and information for parents about the importance of early literacy.



≈ **What was enough in the past won't be enough in the future**

If you have visited the Atheneum over the last several years (and who hasn't come to a performance or lecture, taken a child to story time, or sought out one of our technology wizards — a.k.a. reference librarians — for help with a smart phone or tablet?), you've seen that we keep getting better and better. Our access to important collections is expanding, our educational programs are more targeted to your interests, our performing arts offerings are increasing in number and quality, and our services — like English Language Learning classes — have become more essential to the diverse population of the island.

As we grow better and bolder at meeting the needs of our community, our expenses are growing as well. In order to afford our outstanding staff, resources, programming, technology, and the thousand and one expenses to keep our historic building beautiful — we need your generosity now more than ever.

The Atheneum is indispensable to this community. And your significant gift is indispensable to the Atheneum. It's as simple as that.



10:17 a.m.

Anticipation

Waiting to receive her library card—the key to unlimited resources—after filling out the application form.

≈ Indispensable? Can a library really be that important?

Of course we think so — we’re librarians, after all. But you don’t need to be a librarian to believe libraries are critical to our well-being.

Libraries routinely provide free access to massive collections of books, music, and movies, in the belief that everyone has a right to enjoy the life-enhancing power of knowledge and culture, regardless of income. They offer free services, including the use of computers and the internet, children’s programs, meeting spaces, and information resources for those seeking employment, housing, and help with taxes.



10:40 a.m.

“Nantucket New School, this is Mission Control Houston.”

So begins a live question and answer session between Commander Shane Kimbrough aboard the International Space Station and some lucky second- and fifth-grade students. Our Learning Lab is equipped with sophisticated audio-visual transmission equipment, enabling a universe of long-distance learning opportunities. One of the many ways the Atheneum connects people to the mainland and way beyond.



11:11 a.m.

Tech help, any way, any time, in the Great Hall

Liz, one of our reference librarians, helps a patron get signed up for **Mango Languages** so she can take free online instruction in Italian. Mango is just one of our many eLibrary services, offering free eBooks, eAudioBooks, eMagazines, eLearning courses, and streaming music, movies, and video to all patrons.



11:15 a.m.

At one of our 36 laptops

“Here in the Great Hall,” says the patron pictured above, “we have three wonderful technicians who will help you with anything to do with computers...I do all my computer work at the library.”

But the Atheneum goes even further. It stands out as truly essential because of the functions it serves in Nantucket’s remote location and uniquely diverse social environment. It’s not easy to bring cultural or educational programs to the island, and it’s prohibitively expensive for many families to attend such events on the mainland. In the off-season, when the population shrinks and the weather becomes wild and gray, the community feels particularly isolated.

This is where the Atheneum steps in and shines as an indispensable force on Nantucket. It’s the Atheneum that brings educational and cultural riches from around the globe to this island in the middle of the ocean, every month of the year. It’s the Atheneum that serves as a community hub, drawing residents out to share experiences, ideas, and points of view — no matter the season.

Our doors are always open, and everyone is welcome. Sometimes it’s a lively social scene and sometimes it’s a quiet refuge. It’s warm in the winter and cool in the summer, with something valuable for any curious person of any age. It’s the place where we connect and create bonds with our neighbors.



1:23 p.m.

Sharing her latest creation with a friendly audience

Aspiring writers gather for **Writing Group** every week in the Learning Lab to give feedback to each other on their writing, whatever the genre.

≈ We're depending on you

With three-quarters of our budget coming from individual contributions, it is because of generous donors like you that the Atheneum has been here in the center of town for more than 180 years — a community center, a place to get books and information, a sponsor of education and the performing arts, a host of meeting spaces for civic engagement, and a provider of so many different kinds of assistance to our neighbors.

But now we need your help to prepare for the future — for the island's kids and grandkids, as Nantucket becomes a precious part of their lives. We need your commitment to make sure we're ready for whatever the Nantucket community needs from us in that future.

If we've convinced you that the Atheneum is indispensable to the intellectual, cultural, and social well-being of the island, we need you to show it by making a major gift.

⌚ 3:00 p.m.

What all teens need: a place of their own

We carved out a cozy nook for teens in the Great Hall, with books and resources chosen especially for them. Adults not invited!



⌚ 3:30 p.m.

Makerspace for kids

Today Leslie, our children's librarian, coaches the kids through creating **Scribblebots**. When they're finished, these adorable motorized contraptions will move around, pulling a pen behind them to ink patterns. The kids make them from scratch, and in the process, they each learn how to build and modify a small motor. The Atheneum regularly hosts Makerspaces for all ages using tools and materials ranging in sophistication from pipe cleaners to our 3-D printer.





3:50 p.m.

English required on this Nantucket-style field trip

Mario and his classmates from one of our free English Language Learning classes are practicing their English in a spectacular setting. “I did not speak much English when I came here, which made my life miserable and isolated,” remembers Mario. “But from my first class at the Atheneum, I knew it was the beginning of something good, something that was going to help me grow and find better opportunities in my life.”



4:45 p.m.

Rushing to finish the last few pages...

Because it's due today!

“A gift to the Atheneum is a gift to the entire Nantucket community!”*

It's major gifts that will allow us to develop new cultural and educational programs as needs and interests arise on Nantucket. It's major gifts that will assure the continuation of literacy programs for children and non-English speakers in our community. Major gifts will close the gap between the digital “haves” and “have-nots” by paying for the latest tools, technology, and instruction. And it's major gifts that will ensure the Atheneum continues to attract and maintain top-quality leadership and a full complement of talented, dedicated librarians and staff.

Your significant gift can also leverage additional community support through matching gift appeals. Matching gifts appeals can be anonymous or in your name.

Or consider creating a meaningful legacy by adding a gift to your will. A planned gift or charitable bequest will have a significant impact on the Nantucket community now and for generations to come.

With a long track record of smart, responsible financial management (just ask to see our financial statements—we're proud to show them off!), you can have confidence in our promise that we will invest every dollar you donate wisely.

** Comment made by a recent Nantucket High School grad. She's got it exactly right!*



7:20 p.m.

Moving chairs and tables in the Great Hall—3rd time today!

Miguel, program set-up coordinator, reconfigures chairs, tables, audio-visual equipment, and whatever else might be needed for our 1,300+ events each year. Here, he prepares for tonight's author talk.



8:05 p.m.

Author Talk: Dr. Rocco Monto on his new book, *The Fountain: A Doctor's Prescription to Make 60 the New 30*

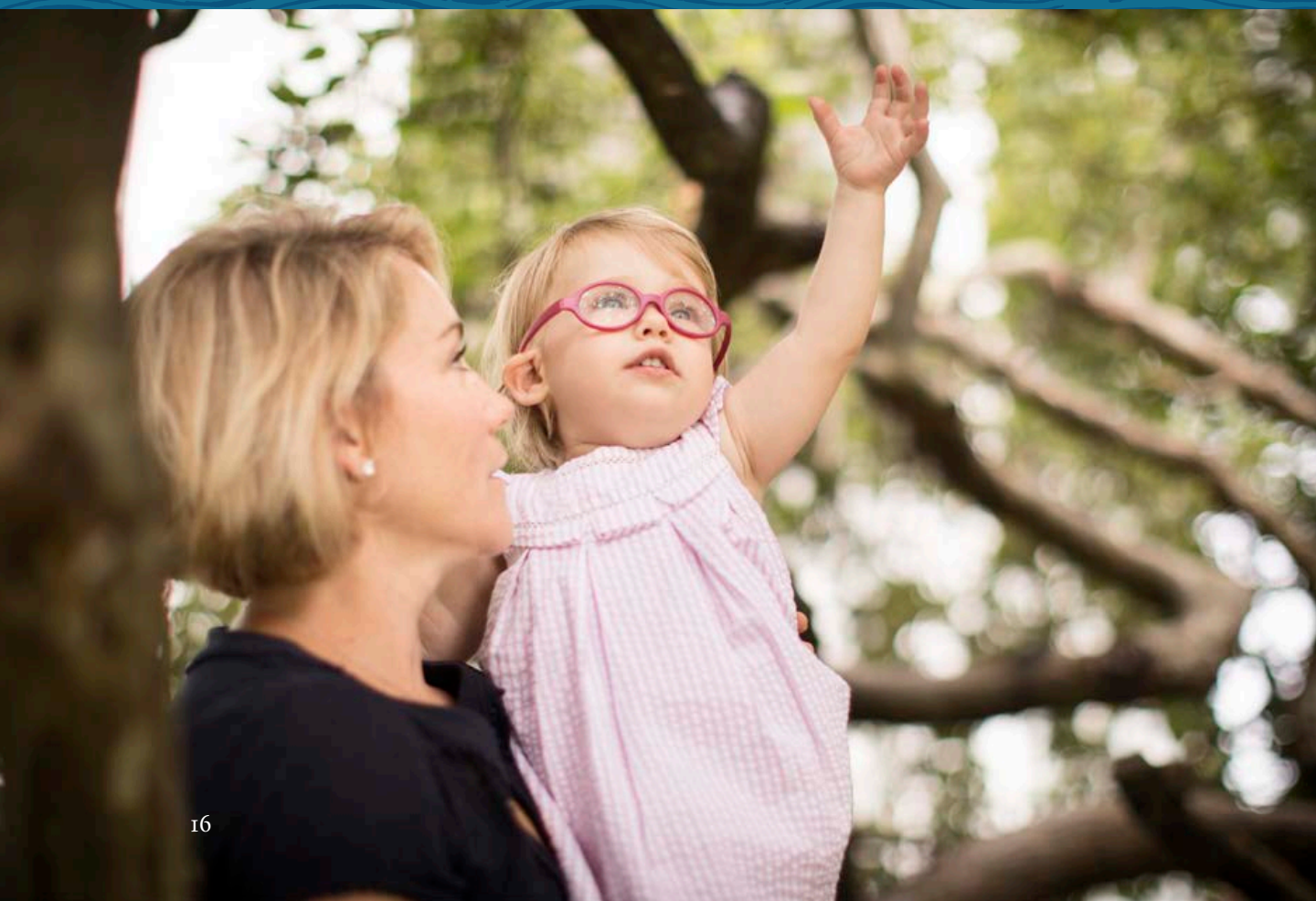
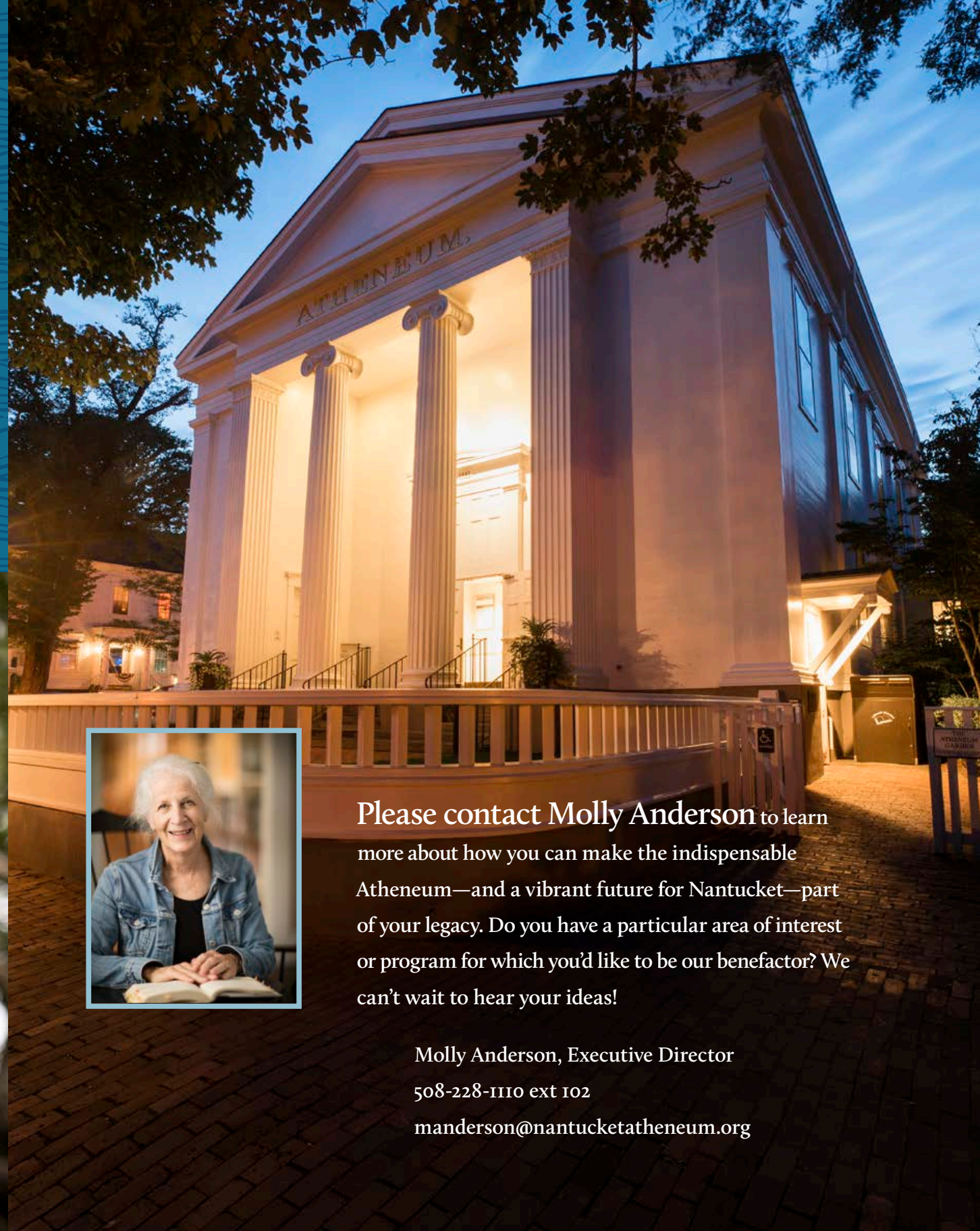
Another full house in the Great Hall.



~ For the sake of the island we love...

You—passionate believers in libraries everywhere, but especially in the value of *this* library to *this* beloved community—are indispensable to the Atheneum's future.

And that means you are indispensable to Nantucket.



Please contact **Molly Anderson** to learn more about how you can make the indispensable Atheneum—and a vibrant future for Nantucket—part of your legacy. Do you have a particular area of interest or program for which you'd like to be our benefactor? We can't wait to hear your ideas!

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“The public library
is where place and
possibility meet.”

STUART DYBEK, AUTHOR, POET,
MACARTHUR FELLOW

NANTUCKET
ATHENEUM



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