

What is CLAMS?

The acronym stands for Cape Libraries Automated Materials Sharing. CLAMS is a cooperative non-profit association governed by its membership of 32 libraries on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket, and linked by a complex computer network based in Hyannis. Participation in CLAMS means each library agrees to share library materials with other members. This means that more than 1.5 million books, videos and audio materials are available to residents, workers, and visitors of participating towns.

Why join CLAMS?

Through membership in the CLAMS network we can offer our patrons a first-rate circulation software program that includes book reviews, cover images and plot summaries; direct Internet access to their library account; downloadable digital media including ebooks and audio books;

daily Interlibrary Loan delivery (instead of the current twice weekly); 2-day access to the holdings of other CLAMS libraries; direct access through the state Virtual Catalog to the holdings of almost all other libraries in the state.

Why join now?

Athena, the Chilmark Library's circulation system is no longer supported by the software owner. It doesn't run on new computers. We have to make a change soon. Also, digital media such as downloadable audiobooks, ebooks and movies have become commonplace in our community and are now a standard part of a contemporary library's offerings. Nearly 70 percent of public libraries now offer digital materials. Increasingly, our patrons are requesting these services.

How much will it cost?

The Friends of the Chilmark Public Library voted unanimously to pay for the entire one-time fee, approximately \$25,000, that will cover the cost of converting to CLAMS. The annual

dues for the town will be approximately \$15,700. We will save \$700 per year in Athena licensing fees. This will also increase our mandatory minimum material expenditure by \$3,000 for a net budget increase of \$18,000.

Are there other options?

Joining the CLAMS network is by far the most cost-effective way to meet these pressing needs. New independent circulation software would cost \$8,000-\$10,000 per year. A separate membership in a downloadable digital media service would be \$12,000 per year, with far fewer titles available to our patrons.

Other library consortiums such as the SAILS network in Southwestern Massachusetts and the Old Colony network on the mid-coast have costs comparable to the CLAMS network.

Questions?

Please contact library director

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CLAMS Library Forum

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 5 p.m.

