

Sarah Light  
Bethlehem Central High School

Ever since I was old enough to read, a trip to the library has been a weekly occurrence. My first book craze was Nancy Drew and I remember meticulously keeping track of every book in the series I read, proudly crossing them off a list as I did. When we moved in eighth grade, a trip to the Bethlehem library was one of the first outings that we made. I remember being amazed at the size of the building, the sheer number of books and how friendly everyone was. Since those days, the library has grown and been rearranged, accumulating more books that I have devoured and a greater CD and DVD collection, something I have grown to appreciate very much lately. Any future Bethlehem library that I could imagine would still have the laid-back and comforting feel that it has now, because that's something that I truly enjoy when I visit it.

I can paint a very clear picture in my head of what I hope the Bethlehem library will look like in 2025. It will definitely remain stuffed with books because, to me, the whole point of a library is to offer up a chance to experience immersion into a story or discovery of a new fact. The future library will no doubt have many kindles, nooks, etc. for people to enjoy, but the main focus will still be on paper and ink, and pages that you can flip with excitement as you are pulled into the story. Providing a place for people to read the "old fashioned" way would be the most important function of the future library.

Despite my love for books, I also appreciate the opportunities for improvement that are offered by new technology and a library that takes advantage of them could expand its resources to a great extent. In the future library, classes are offered to children to teach them how to use this new technology, lessons that will greatly benefit them as individuals but also the community. In addition, the future library will have more space

Sarah Light  
Bethlehem Central High School

for students to work, especially in groups. My fantasy includes larger rooms each equipped with computer preloaded with databases that can be used for research. Also, students would be able to access files online from their teachers in order to complete assignments outside of class without wasting paper. This would be a very green practice, but in addition, would encourage students to use the library more.

The ultimate connection to the community that I have often wished that the library had currently was an entire network available to people at home through which they could download books, listen to music, and watch movies, all without actually having to physically go to the library themselves. It would allow people who don't have the time or the capability to go the library a way to access all of those great resources.