

## Director's report

December 3, 2020

### 1. Gratitude

- Ms. Betty's Crafts evolved a bit this month, to become "Take & Make Crafts." Betty put together bags with all the supplies needed to make milk carton gingerbread houses, along with a YouTube video that people can watch, and printed instructions. We're sure this is going to be a hit, and is a great way to use materials from the basement craft supplies.
- Kate has been creating a niche for teens, to make our young adult collection browser-friendly and inviting, and it looks good so far!
- Thanks the Cheli, Betsy, David Greenberg, Eileen Sauvageau, and the West County Kindness Project for sending letters to support our application for the Libraries Transforming Communities Grant!
- Thanks to Nancy for the great work on our strategic plan, Express Browsing advertisement/signage, and the poster for the Kindness Reading Project!
- Ellen has agreed to make us another grapevine wreath, in celebration of community and the solstice, and for people to set their intentions for the coming year, or share gratitude/let go of something that has passed. We'll set this up in the front window, along with hand sanitizer, and will clean the station often. We're grateful for this bit of festivity.
- Liz Sonnenberg has completed the first leg of her project to inventory the local history materials on tops of the stacks and create a spreadsheet with descriptive information, including recommendations for digitization or deaccessioning, and has agreed to look over whatever we come up with in respect to policies and gift forms governing the local history collection. It's been great to have Liz around, and for her support with this massive project!
- Jim Slowinski has fixed the lights in the children's section, and more importantly, the light nearest the back door (at the top of the ramp). Yay for illumination!
- We are sad to note the passing of our long-time supporter and patron, Audrey Brown. As Kate wrote to her family:

In addition to beaming about her family and her favorite furry companion, Audrey always expressed a great fondness for reading. Her friendly visits and support for the library over all these years will be sadly missed.

## 2. Building/grounds

- Sandri has rescheduled upgrades to the HVAC for December 7<sup>th</sup>. This Saturday, we'll be most of the chairs, the file cabinet, a low, rolling desk that we don't use, the wooden card catalog that we intend to one day use for seed sharing, and a few other items to the basement, in accordance with our plans for Express Browsing. With the Make & Take Craft bags, lots of face-outs, staff picks, new teen section, solstice wreath, lots of new books for all ages, and spiffy signage, we hope to make everyone's return to the library a wondrous experience! Our new goal is to open for Express Browsing on Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, but let's have a discussion about this when we meet on Monday the 6<sup>th</sup>.
- The project to improve our drainage and expand parking is moving along, so we'll be able to come up with a number to earmark in the first round of budgeting, due by the end of the month. Doug Macleay and Mike Slowinski are both recommending that we contract with qualified professionals to manage the repaving, rather than having it done by the highway department. Bids will be required for a project of this size, and we will likely need to put in a capital request to the town.
- The fence painting project is coming along, with the first coat having been completed today. Feedback has been all positive!
- Further to the work he's already completed (mentioned above), Jim Slowinski will be installing some outlets in areas where extension cords and power strips have been used on a long-term basis, to improve our safety and reduce the risk of fire.
- The masonry/repainting work has been estimated to cost \$1,500 per Barry Nye.
- We've not yet taken any action regarding the NEDCC's suggestion that we install locks on the basement doors for improved security. The outer door is held closed with bricks, as the latch does not work, and the inside door is secured with a sliding bolt.
- It may be time to consider whether a port-o-potty is needed. Besides people working from their cars, some teens have been skating in the parking lot. The neighbor said noise is not a problem but worries about people urinating within view.
- As mentioned above, we're moving/have moved more furniture and supplies to the basement as we prepare to reopen for Express Browsing. These items will be kept off of the floor, and I've also purchased a dehumidifier. We will continue to use materials from the craft supply collection for more Take & Make Crafts in the year ahead. The organization that was coming to assess the card catalog, display case, and chairs, has not been able to visit yet, on account of the pandemic.

## 3. Administration

- Our application for the ALA's "Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on small and rural libraries" grant was successfully submitted. Our proposal would cover supplies and staff time for a pop-up library at the transfer station, on six occasions, to meet people who don't use the library, and talk with them about their connectivity and pain points related thereto, and more importantly, to connect with more people and grow our rapport in the community. Funds from the grant would also cover books, ebooks, and more, for the Kindness Reading Project.
- Following the report submitted last month for your consideration, it would be good to re-group the Trustees' governance sub-committee, to the ends of drafting a mission statement, collection development policy, and protocols for access specific to the local history collection,

and a Deed of Gift to create a record of items that are received or deaccessioned to other organizations. These would be further to the collection development policy for the general collection. A few other areas of governance also need to be developed as of yet: library membership; Board; facility; and, community relations.

I also recommend, in consideration of the work that we are discussing regarding the parking area, drainage, and grounds, that the Board considers forming a fundraising committee that can work with the Friends of the Library and make recommendations as to fundraising goals and initiatives.

- Related to the above, next month, the MBLC will be offering a training for trustees on the topics of succession planning, and recruiting new members; please keep an eye out for an email with details. Meanwhile, Lily Vreeland has expressed interest in joining the Board when a seat is available.
- I'm very happy with our strategic plan, and ready to move forward with setting our 2021 goals, if others feel the same—pending one change, which is to state also our intentions to grow our membership. This could just be added to the point:

“We increase our space, funding, service hours, and programs, sustainably, and innovate to make the most of our time and limited resources.”

#### Proposed discussion and vote on the GML 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

- We received the art appraisal from Aves Appraisal (included with this report). A vote is needed to accept this report, before the Town can circle back to our insurance company.
- Kate is adjusting her hours to work the desk some on Wednesdays, in addition to her Monday 1-6 shift. This helps Kate to meet her allocated hours from the 2020 budget and helps Chelsea to put more time towards administrative tasks and planning.

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- November circulation was higher than it was for the same month last year. Another library saw this and contacted us to ask what it is that we're doing right!

Circulation by month		
	2019	2020
January	1,287	1,672
February	2,473	1,552
March	1,296	1,052
April	1,130	44
May	1,057	134
June	900	346
July	1,270	1,002
August	1,206	1,285
September	1,210	1,322
October	1,333	1,376
November	1,348	1,486

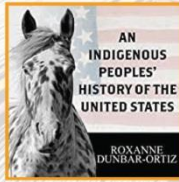
#### 4. Youth services

- In November, we produced three Stories & Songs Online videos, which have been viewed a total of 33 times—about the same as the previous month.
- Betty's November turkey craft video received 21 views—10 more than in the previous month.
- Chelsea attended a CFCE meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>, where it was noted that their online programs aren't getting much attendance. They gave kudos to GML for our videos, and we agreed to help talk theirs up on social media.
- Talia Miller has asked us to keep any discards from the children's collections for them to distribute through the school, and to help advertise some of their programs. In turn, they are happy to distribute a flyer talking up our services for kids and families, if we will put one together.

#### 5. Public services

- The Kindness Reading Project, a reading and discussion group that we've struck up with the West County Kindness Project, is off to a great start. We've loaned out about a dozen copies of the print book, and ten people have signed up for the discussion on December 16! Whether or not we receive the ALA grant, their free training will help me to dust off my facilitation skills to lead this and other discussions.

# KINDNESS READING PROJECT



**Read the  
book.  
Join the  
discussion.**

**GML** and the West County Kindness Project invite you to read and discuss *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*, by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz.

Copies available at GML and from Libby/OverDrive.

Join the group discussion by Zoom on **December 16th at 6:00 p.m.**

Please email [griswold@colrain-ma.gov](mailto:griswold@colrain-ma.gov) or call 413-624-3619 to register in advance.



Griswold  
Memorial **GML**  
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413.624.3619

- We have a few other programs in the works for the late winter/spring, two via the Libraries in the Woods collaborative:
  - The first is about walks in Western Massachusetts, and is guided by someone who wrote several AMC guides on walking.
  - We are narrowing in on the LITW selection for the next LITW community read. Stay tuned for an announcement!
  - I've also written a letter of support for an in-person, socially distant, outdoor activity in May, dyeing silk scarves and face masks.