

Director's report

May 14, 2021

1. Gratitude

- “If you want to go far, go together.” This month’s report is filled with updates as to what we’ve recently accomplished, and plans for the future. None of it would be possible without our great team and all of the support that we receive from our community. Thanks to each of you for your contributions, especially Betty, who even in grief, shows up for us in numerous ways.

2. Building/grounds

- We’ve been following up with Steve from Western Mass Pro Wash with questions related to the power washing bid.
- Barry Nye completed our masonry work last month. The cost was \$1,500.00.
- The Main St. water main project has meant that the water at the library has been off-and-on, so we rented a Port-a-Potty with a hand washing station to get through that time period. The water district agreed to cover the costs per my request.
- The pop-up tent that was covering our picnic table ripped again, along the same seam as last time. We have reached out to someone with an industrial sewing machine who offered to repair it for us.
- Doug Macleay has completed the survey of the library grounds, and it is in processing. The next step will be to solicit proposals from engineers/architects. Doug has already reached out to Dave Vreeland.
- In follow-up to feedback we received this Memorial Day, we’ve purchased red, white and blue bunting to hang on the balconies. We’ll be sure to put them up in advance of the July 4th holiday.

3. Administration

- Please be sure to check out the new Kanban board in the window, where we are tracking and showing what projects are in process, or we’ll soon be taking on.
- Howard Burrows, a trustee with the Brooks Memorial Library in Brattleboro, has reached out to us in regards to Agile and strategic planning, and with the idea of our teaming up as “sister libraries.” We’ve scheduled some time to chat in person on July 1st.
- The Libraries Transform Communities grant implementation period will come to a close on July 31st.
- The annual survey (ARIS) will open July 1st.

4. Public services

- About 85 people came out for the first annual William Apess Day on May 21st, including a delegation of Wampanoag elders from Mashpee. One interesting outcome was the idea that Colrain and Mashpee could become “sister cities.” Participants noted the ways they will celebrate Apess’ legacy in years to come:
 - *“Continue to learn, share, and be thankful for Indigenous folks—the land’s stewards and ancestors. Use modern means to spread awareness and spread the word that THEY ARE STILL HERE!”*

- *“Speak his name; continue to learn about native peoples of MA; continue to act; contact our state rep., attend upcoming programs; support native history in our schools.”*
- *“How we can evolve our language from ‘own’ land to other language – guardian/borrower – and add these to legal deeds and dialogues.”*
- *“Ensure my grandchildren learn the true history of the land the live on.”*
- *“I will help compile K-12 curricular materials so local teachers are better equipped to teach our children and their parents and guardians about the true history of our beloved Native peoples and current matters.”*

Other outcomes included [the piece in the Recorder](#) and [Drew’s letter to the editor](#).

- Chelsea and Sarah Hertel-Fernandez, the Director at the Belding Memorial Library in Ashfield met with Jenny Abeles, the Education Coordinator at the Franklin County Jail to discuss library services to people in the jail. Since then, seven area libraries have signed on to give us their paperback discards, and we will likely deliver our first batch of materials next month. Currently, there aren’t any physical books available there for people who are incarcerated, though the ALA states that, “People who are incarcerated or detained should have the ability to obtain books and materials from outside the prison for their personal use” (2020).
- The Carol Purington Poetry Collective met on Friday, May 4th. Eight people attended, including three new participants. After these meetings, participants receive an email with the names and authors of the poems that were shared. This group will not be meeting in July, on account of the Independence Day holiday.
- We hosted the first library pop-up at the transfer station on Saturday, June 5th. We registered two new users, loaned a few items, and held quite a few conversations. Our conversation prompt was about annual town meeting, whether folks planned to attend, and what local issues were on folks’ minds as we headed into town meeting. We chatted with at least 25 people. Some of the comments and questions we heard were as follows:
 - *People either satisfied with, or “anxiously awaiting” Broadband (approximately 6).*
 - *I never attended town meeting because I didn’t know it was open to the public.*
 - *I wish there were a public compost available at the dump (2).*
 - *I’m concerned about invasive species and/or mosquito management (4).*
 - *I’m concerned about speeding and/or traffic safety (2).*
 - *I’m concerned about food security.*
 - *I wish there was a sewer system in town.*
 - *I’m concerned about 5G and whether it’s safe or not.*
 - *I’m concerned that people don’t understand school funding or take pride in our schools.*
 - *I’m concerned about getting people to participate in local committees.*
 - *I’m concerned about kids having to wear masks at the schools.*
 - *I’m concerned that our schools will start teaching critical race theory.*
 - *I’m concerned about loose dogs.*

Several folks requested a follow-up email with information about town meeting. Our next pop-ups are tentatively scheduled for June 19th, July 10th, and July 24th.

See photos here!

- As of June 18th, 12 adults have registered for Summer Reading Club, and two have registered for SRC Crafts with Ms. Betty.
- Upcoming programs include:
 - Kindness Reading Project: *Such a Fun Age* by Kiley Reid – Wednesday, June 23rd at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom;

- Carol Purington Poetry Collective – Friday, August 6th at 6:00 by Zoom;
- “Dye-ing to wear it” workshop with Rhonda Fazio – date TBD;
- Zine workshop with Trouble Mandleson at Just Roots – date TBD;
- Fix-It Day – Saturday, September 25th.

5. Youth services

- Local author Angela Diterlizzi has given us her blessing to create a story walk using her book *Some Pets*, at Pine Hill Orchards. Nancy is helping us to format the pages following the template and suggestions at <https://www.curiouscitydpw.com/free-storywalk/>.
- Magic with Scott Jameson was rescheduled, on account of weather, for July 17th at 11:00 a.m.
- Emily Willis, the media specialist at MTRSD, will meet with us soon about forming a Young Adult Advisory Committee, which will likely include students from several of the hill towns, and rotate between our libraries.
- As of June 18th, 10 children have registered for Summer Reading Club, and about eight have signed up for each of the SRC Crafts nights with Ms. Betty.

