

Director's Report November 2021

Submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on November 15, 2021

Joys and successes:

- The opportunity to speak to the Colrain Select Board and to a full room of Colrainers about the GML's role in our community certainly counts among our successes this month, especially as we received nice feedback from Mike Slowinski of the Select Board, our Town Administrator, Kevin Fox, and the School Superintendent, Cheryl Stanton. Thanks to everyone from the GML Board of Trustees, the Friends of the Library, and other friends who came out to support the library.
- Chelsea and library patron Cyndy Weeks had the privilege of speaking to New England Public Media's Dara Kenney and Mara Schwayder, from the program, "And Another Thing," on November 10th, about the ways that public libraries help to bridge the digital divide. [Listen here!](#)
- We received the following feedback about the Carol Purington Poetry Collective: "SO lovely seeing old friends there. Beautiful community. . . . It was very special."
- We saw a number of new faces at GML this month, including families who have just moved to town, but also long-time residents we met at the transfer station, and a few others who turned to the library for help with technology and participating in local government.
- The season of "popping up" at the transfer station has come to a close. This program was an incredible success, as we reached more than a 100 people and held many thought-provoking conversations. Feedback from members in the community has been incredibly positive.

Building & Grounds:

- The slide deck that Chelsea shared at the October 26th Select Board meeting was based upon reports, data, and quotations gathered from the library collection and FRCOG, and may be accessed [here](#).
- Following the Select Board meeting on October 26th, Shawn Kimberley was able to locate plans showing the exact location of the septic system. Doug Macleay followed up with Mike Slowinski of the Select Board and with Chelsea to say that the next step is for the Town of Colrain to establish the whereabouts of our property lines. They have contacted Dan Werner to ask if he will do this work.

Programs and services:

- Chelsea and Sarah Hertel-Fernandez will begin their book club with "D-Pod," the women's unit at the Franklin County Jail, in December. On October 19th, they met with women in the unit and with Education Coordinator Jenny Abeles, and also a few correctional officers, to iron out the program logistics and meet with women in D-Pod, who also contributed their ideas as to what will make for a successful program.

- The Kindness Reading Project met on October 20th to discuss *See No Stranger: A memoir and manifesto of revolutionary love*, by Valarie Kaur. Besides Chelsea, there were five participants. The group will meet again on December 15th after reading *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson.
- Sue Booth-Daniels organized a work bee at GML to carve pumpkins and make decorations for the Arthur A. Smith covered bridge Halloween Event. Though rain put a damper on the crafts at GML, at least six people carved pumpkins here, and the library acted as a base for materials to be organized and stored before and after the event.
- The Carol Purington Poetry Collective met on the evening of November 5th, with 12 people in attendance! One new participant shared that she was joining after seeing the group photo that was included in a recent issue of the Clarion.
- Chelsea hosted the final “pop-up library” of the season at the Colrain transfer station on November 6th, where she connected with another 30 people. This time around, the discussion prompt was about town committees in need of representatives.
- On November 27th we will be co-hosting “Crazy for Kimchi – with Kate!” at 18 Jacobs Rd. in Heath, with the Heath Free Public Library. Please register in advance, as space is limited.
- We are hoping to launch “one-on-one tech help,” in December or January, on Wednesday afternoons and by appointment, to help people with their specific tech needs.
- Chelsea created a small display for Indigenous People’s Heritage Month (November) and is keeping in communication with Drew Lopenzina, Rhonda Anderson, and Talia Miller about planning William Apess Day 2022.

Administration:

- Library staff will meet on the morning of Tuesday, November 17th, for team building and training, and to plan projects for the year ahead.
- Chelsea is making plans to attend the American Library Association Annual Conference, June 23-June 28, in Washington, D.C.
- Thanks to the Governance sub-committee for their work in updating the library’s bylaws. This work is especially important as libraries (including [schools](#) and [public libraries](#)) across the country are facing increasing challenges to materials, and to their staffing and overall budgets.