

Director's Report February 2022

Submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on March 18, 2022

Joys and successes:

- New Busy Bags are here! Themes include bugs, weather, monkeys, and more! Thanks to Ms. Betty for ordering them and subsequently putting everything together in its right place. These have been a super popular addition to our collection.
- We've moved all of the large print together into one section to make it easier for people to find and browse large print titles. Big thanks to Sasha for spearheading this project! The same goes for changing the shelving location and adding new call numbers to our Easy Readers.

Building & Grounds:

- In the interest of getting spring and summer programming *off the ground*, Chelsea reached out to the technical school and other people in the community to explore the possibility of building a low platform. The technical school advised that this is not the type of project that they could help with, but another library patron drew up some plans and obtained some salvaged lumber and decking. Chelsea will follow up with town administrators about insurance and other considerations, and is seeking volunteers to help with construction.
- Elizabeth Erikson and David Greenberg donated a new 8.6" by 11.6" handmade braided jute and denim area rug for the children's area!
- Per the February 2022 Library Board of Trustees' meeting, Chelsea followed up with the library's cleaning service about damage done to the thermostat. The manager spoke with cleaning staff who said they did not observe anything out of sorts when they were cleaning.
- The library sidewalks are not being repaired as part of the Town's other concrete projects, as we had previously been advised. Perhaps it can wait until we tackle the ramp, rear entryway, drainage, and paving projects, though it seems to have gotten worse over winter and could pose a safety hazard. This is noted on the GML Building Maintenance log linked here. Reviewing this document, Chelsea asks if the Trustees would like to again pursue power washing to remove mildew and grime from the library's façade.
- Bing Waldsmith happened to take a look at the windows during a recent visit to the library, and suggested that they may need to be re-caulked, as it's her guess that this is how moisture is coming inside. I am not sure if this is included in the scope of what the energy commission is considering but will inquire.

Programs and services:

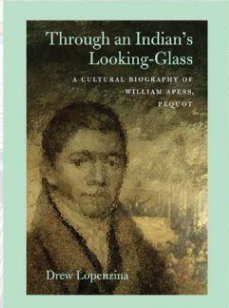
- The library helped out with the Colrain Central School's recent food drive by hosting a box where patrons could donate non-perishable food items. Of course, we also used this item to display cookbooks from our collection.
- We're delighted with the new "Stories and Songs online with Julie Stepanek" program, and pleased to add three dates in April. Participants can attend the program "live" by Zoom or watch

a recording after. These are not hosted on our YouTube page but are posted to the GML Facebook page.

- The Carol Purington Poetry Collective met on March 4th, with nine people in attendance this time. While current events drew more than one of us to poems written about war, Caleb Kimberley's recitation of "The Song of Mr. Toad," by Kenneth Grahame.
- One person took us up on our new "One-on-one tech help" service this month. Admittedly, we have not promoted this very much, but may do so as social distancing and masking restrictions are relaxed.
- Drew Lopenzina will attend the Kindness Reading Project's next meeting on April 20th at 6:00 p.m. when we will be discussing his book, *Through an Indian's Looking Glass*. Chelsea ordered books for the June meeting of the KRP, when we will partner with the Heath Free Public Library to host a discussion about the *1619 Project* by Nikole Hannah-Jones.

KINDNESS READING PROJECT
presents:

Through an Indian's Looking-Glass
with the author, **Drew Lopenzina**
Wednesday, April 20th
at 6:00 p.m.



- On Saturday, April 23rd the library will host an "Earth Day Jam" with local educator and musician Ms. Hannah French at 11:00 a.m. Other "Spruce it up, Colrain" events are taking shape, including a possible performance from the "Seniority Dancers," and an information booth attended by the Friends of the Library.
- Chelsea will be meeting with Drew Lopenzina and Talia Miller, and hopefully also with others, before the Trustees' meeting on the 21st to discuss plans for William Apess Day on May 21st. Drew and his students have developed a website to help teachers learn about and develop lesson plans about William Apess, and we are considering hosting an all-age poetry event. Please stay tuned for details.
- We will be resuming in-person programming at the jail on March 22nd. Both donations and programs have been on hold since the wave of the omicron variant.

Administration:

- The Town Administrator called on March 19th to advise that per his calculations, the Director's hourly rate for FY23 would be \$26.17 per hour, and Library Assistants would receive \$17.61 per hour. (The budget we put forward allowed for \$25.76/hour for the Director and \$16.69 for substitutes.) This is based on a 5% COLA applied to the \$47,135 in staffing allocated in the FY22 warrant. The discrepancy is because my spreadsheet used the base salary of \$35,720 for FY22, whereas Kevin's had \$36,282.21. The difference amounts to \$662/year. Making this change does slightly affect other numbers in the spreadsheet, since the MAR is based on a calculation. A new spreadsheet is included in this month's Board package for your vote.
- The Colrain Selectboard adopted a mask advisory in place of the previous mask mandate. Joe Kurland reminded everyone present that it is still a best practice to wear a mask in the presence

of people who may be more vulnerable, including seniors and young children who have not been vaccinated. We have continued to practice wearing our masks and keep our sign that says, "Welcome, please wear a mask," in place, but also have not been making an issue when someone is not wearing their mask. Technically, "express browsing" is still in place. Perhaps the trustees will consider a motion to follow the select board's advisory and to allow patrons back in for reading, gathering, studying, playing, and computer use. I note that we are planning to host Candidates' Night on Wednesday, April 27th at 6:00 p.m.

- Per the February Library Board of Trustees' meeting, Chelsea added everyone to the GML's shared Google calendars, including events and the staff schedule.
- Chelsea followed up with Edward Kitson of Aves Art Appraisals regarding the busts described in his October 2022 report, and also with the town administrator. As well, I asked about the framed Act to Incorporate, as suggested by Jill in the last trustee meeting, and they would indeed like to hang this at the town office. A gift form to show this transfer is attached, along with another to document the transfer of a Colrain bicentennial poster to the Historical Society, for your review and approval. This is pending also assurance from the Historical Society that they are able to keep items in their care in reasonably safe conditions, indoors and not in a basement, garage, or attic.
- We set up a new Trello board where staff can see what projects are pending and in-progress, and to better track weekly/monthly recurring tasks like Wowbrary and the Clarion.
- The Library was closed for a snow day on Friday, February 25th.
- Check out this screenshot of the CW Mars statistics tracking dashboard. Would the library trustees like a virtual tour to see what data visualizations are available? Both circulations and visit were down for February. The average visitors per month for the past six months is 278, whereas we saw 345 visitors and January and 236 in February. This is about two visitors per hour.

