

Director's Report April 2022

Submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on April 20th, 2022

Joys and successes:

- Kate had a cameo shift the afternoon of Friday, April 8th, when Chelsea had another obligation. Kate reported that she saw lots of familiar faces but also signed up a new family while she was here.
- The film project "Lost Nation," brought people in and out of the library for print services, wifi, and to use the bathroom. From [an article in *The Greenfield Recorder*](#), "'It's great," Mike Slowinski said. "It gives great exposure to western Mass. and Colrain, and it's all positive. The natural beauty of this area is under-appreciated by a lot of people. Colrain is very bucolic. We have a lot of very nice areas. I think this will bring positive attention to Colrain. There's an awful lot of hidden gems in these hills."
- It's sure nice to be open to the public again! There's nothing quite like getting to work while listening to caregivers reading books out loud.
- We've resumed programming in the Franklin County Jail! Chelsea spoke to about 50 people in "D Pod" on March 29, and 10 people in "B Pod," on April 5. One person who was about to be released was able to get a library card, so they will be all set when they visit their library for the first time!

Building & Grounds:

- Plans for a modular stage were shared with the Fundraising Committee and Friends of the Library, who agreed to cover the costs, up to \$1,000.00. The Town Administrator advised that the library's general and liability insurance are sufficient, and Chelsea submitted plans to the Building Inspector, who advised that a permit is not necessary. Chelsea approached Pine Hill Orchards to ask if they might be interested in sharing/cost-sharing the stage, and provided them with the library's summer events schedule.
- Mike Slowinski followed up with us in regards to the two lights on the front walk, closest to the road, that are not working since work was done on the steps and sidewalks. While he was here, Chelsea raised concerns about the holes in the cement, especially near the book drop. Mike advised that he will get these patched up for us as soon as possible.
- The basement flooded on April 8th, because the fire hose had slipped off of the sump pump output when the tape failed. An official from the fire department advised that a more permanent solution is needed, or the problem will recur.
- Peter Brooks is submitting a project narrative to the DOER and Town of Colrain to install "low e" glass inserts in the library windows that would keep UV lights out, while keeping energy from escaping.

- The mulberry and apple trees on the library grounds are in need of care! Is this something that the Trustees have managed in the past?
- Talia Miller with MTRSD followed up about a kiosk they would like to donate to the library to help showcase important information. Chelsea asked if we can revisit the topic when we know more about our plans for other landscaping and outdoor improvement projects. The kiosk can be seen here. This is a reminder also for us to continue discussions for a new sign for the library.

Programs and services:

- Stories and Songs continued this month, thanks to Julie Stepanek and CFCE! The last session that we have scheduled is April 27th. Numbers have been pretty low and we don't seem to be reaching Colrainers, despite advertising on the "Colrain, yeah, I'm from there" Facebook page, our Facebook page, the CFCE Facebook page, and the Colrain Clarion. We will discontinue this program through the summer and decide if we want to start something new in the fall.
- We are planning a new StoryWalk™ at Pine Hill! Dominique has selected a couple of books that might be a good fit for the "Read Beyond the Beaten Path" Summer Reading Club theme. Chelsea has begun planning for a SRC kick-off party on Friday, June 17th or Saturday, June 18th.
- Chelsea met with Lisa White to explore and discuss a new initiative, "Walk-in Wellness," to be held on the third Wednesday of every month, beginning July 20th, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at GML. Our public health nurses would be available during this time to share important information and connect Colrainers to community resources. Some of the issues that this program aims to address are tick-borne illnesses and prevention; mental health, including alcoholism, addiction, and depression; food insecurity; elder care; asthma, COPD and other respiratory illnesses; and diabetes.
- The Carol Purington Poetry Collective met on April 1st. There were eight people in attendance. We set aside some time to remember Robin Brooks, and some people offered poems in her honor. Here is one of those:

The Canoe, by Alison Luterman

When I was young, years ago, canoeing on the green
Green River, with my young first husband,

I wriggled out of my shorts, eased over the lip
of our little boat, and became eel-woman,

naked and glistening, borne along in the current.
He paddled, I floated and spun,

and let the ripples take me.
Even an hour of that kind of freedom

can last for years and years,
can become a touchstone you return to

long after the rented canoe has been returned,
and the road trip has ended, and then the marriage,

and then the husband's brief life, and you yourself
have become someone else entirely; still

you return in your mind to the days
you could set up a tent in the dark,

and build a small fire
from birch bark and newspaper

and sit beside it, sipping tea, savoring your muscles' sweet ache,
as one by one the uncountable stars came out.

- Save these dates!
 - Candidates' Night
Wednesday, April 27th at 6:00 p.m.
Followed by a moment of silence and song
In person at GML and livestreamed at facebook.com/GMLColrain
 - Carol Purington Poetry Collective
Friday, May 6th at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom
 - Jewish Life in Song, with Yosli Kurland and Aaron Bousel of the Wholesale Klezmer Band
Wednesday, May 18th at 6:00 p.m.
In person at GML and livestreamed at facebook.com/GMLColrain
 - William Apess Day
Saturday, May 21st (details TBD)
 - Kindness Reading Project with Griswold Memorial Library and Heath Free Library book club discussion of *The 1619 Project* by Nikole Hannah-Jones
Wednesday, June 15th at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom

Administration:

- Chelsea submitted the final draft of an LSTA "Go local" grant to the MBLC on April 5th. This one-year, \$7,500 grant is for "A People's History of Colrain" podcast that we propose to produce in partnership with Ohketeau Cultural Center and Piti Theatre Company. This project will begin this fall, if the application is successful.
- GML was also included in another grant proposal, in partnership with Belding Memorial Library in Ashfield, Franklin County Jail, and GCTV to launch "Read to the Children," and expand programming in the Franklin County Jail. This grant would likewise be funded for one year beginning this fall.
- After some back-and-forth with the town administrator, Chelsea is asking for the Library Board of Trustees to review and accept the revised budget for FY23.
- The staff PC had to be upgraded, as we weren't able to run the updates that we needed to keep up with emails. This was planned for FY23, though we were not able to hold out until then, and our service was suffering from all of the bounced emails. The refurbished replacement computer cost \$623.99 and was installed by Northeast IT.
- We held a staff meeting in late March to talk about our projects and strengthen our relationships with each other. We will meet again on April 28th for Sasha and Dominique to both learn cataloging. The feedback that we receive about their service has been glowing. Dominique went above and beyond this month in helping to shift the children's area, and Sasha has been spearheading lists and reviews in Wowbrary.

- Circulation for March 2022 were just slightly higher than in March of 2021. Visits increased this month, but then again the library was open more hours/days in March than in February. The average number of visitors per hour was 2.5, also on average with the preceding few months. Getting visitors back into the library is a great metric for us to focus on this spring and summer.

Total Circulations by Checkout Month

