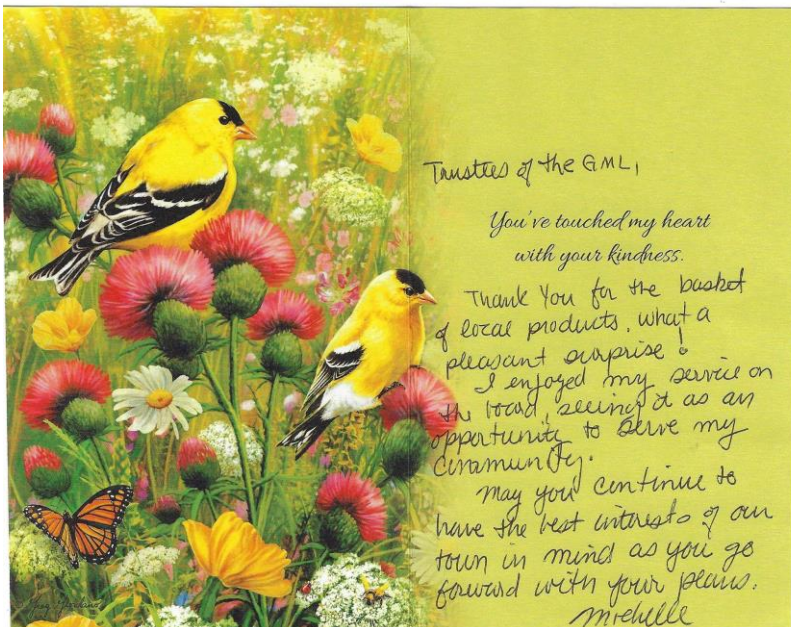


Director's Report November 2022

Respectfully submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on November 14, 2022

Joys and successes:

- We had fun celebrating Halloween with everyone at Pine Hill, and here at GML! Thanks to Dominique for collecting and printing the literacy tips that we gave out with our Halloween candy, and to Pine Hill Orchard for hosting another successful event.
- Welcome our newest on-call library assistant, Caitlyn Conley! Caitlyn has an MFA in Creative Nonfiction, and experience in theater and event coordinating. She and her family are new to Colrain—we met at the Halloween event at Pine Hill!
- The Friends of the Library put the flower gardens to rest, and planted some bulbs for spring. We chatted about the holiday season and made plans to decorate the light posts and balconies with greenery, lights, and bows, in addition to stringing lights in the trees.
- Michelle Hillman sent this thank you card for the gift basket, and in regards to her time as a library trustee:



Building & Grounds:

- Heartwood Window Restoration, a local company, won the bid to install the energy-efficient window inserts. This work has been mostly completed as of November 7th, and they are barely noticeable! In fact, we suddenly received several compliments as to how sparkling clean our windows look!
- Emma Picardi of the Conway School of Landscape Design will present her report to her classmates and instructors on Saturday, November 19th by Zoom. Chelsea will be in

attendance and has asked if others can join.

Programs and services:

- We purchased two new laptops this year, and then upgraded the two old laptops, so we can now let them out to patrons on loan! The loan period will be for one week. A program called Deep Freeze protects both the machine and the user by “cleaning” the computers between uses. The patron would be responsible for the cost of the computer if it is not returned or if it is damaged. We’re in conversation with Northeast IT to work out all of the logistics behind these loans and will plan on a “soft launch” before we advertise this service more broadly.
- We began advertising for participants to our People’s History of Colrain podcast, and also purchased some of the equipment that will be used in our production.

Please help us create the People's History of Colrain Podcast!

GML, with help from the [Piti Theatre Company](#) and [Ohketeau Cultural Center](#), seeks participants ages 14 and older to help research, write, and produce a local history podcast! Uncover forgotten stories, learn new tech skills, and connect with others in our community.

This project kicks off in the New Year and will continue through September of 2023, thanks to a generous [grant from the MBLC](#).

Interested parties should email Griswoldmemoriallibrary@gmail.com to learn more!

- November concludes our Wellness Wednesday series with the Regional Public Health Nurses from FRCOG. Lisa and/or Meg were on site five times in total, and though the last of these visits has not happened as of the time of this report being written, they have connected with 25 people so far, providing covid and flu vaccines, along with important information.
- We’re ready to launch our GML “Craft Central,” a reboot/continuation of the Maker Cart where patrons can use craft supplies like hot glue guns, washi tape, and decorative scissors. We’re suggesting that people use these items in house or speak with a staff member about taking them on short-term loan. In related news, we added two digital recorders (audio) to the Library of Things. These relate to the People’s History of Colrain Podcast but is also available for others to borrow.

Administration:

- Chelsea submitted several applications to the Digital Commonwealth for digitizing Annual Town Reports. The library currently holds several boxes of these booklets, as well as bound volumes, all of which are also held by the Town Clerk. The Digital Commonwealth has since advised that they will accept this project, but this means that we need to find a way to get these items there!
- In October, there were 1,486 checkouts and renewals, up a bit from September when there were 1,301 checkouts and renewals. The monthly average to date, for this year so far, is 1,392. This is consistent with the previous year.

We helped 372 in-person visitors, or about 2.6 visitors per hour in October. The average per month to date this year is 359 visits, or 2.7 visits per hour open.

Our patrons borrowed 98 eBooks, and 121 audiobooks in October. The 2022 averages per month are 85 and 137, respectively, as compared to 94 and 135 in 2021.

- The library’s draft budget for the fiscal year 2024 is due to the Town Administrator December 31st. Several grant opportunities are available that may help us to augment our municipal appropriation:
 - [Mass Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund offers Capital Grants](#) up to \$200,000 (1:1 match) for projects such as renovations or repairs to an existing structure, or

Feasibility & Technical Assistance Grants up to \$50,000 (1:1 match) for costs and expenses related to overall planning and feasibility for a proposed eligible project. Applications are due February 2nd.

- Letters of intent for LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act)* FY2024 grant applications are due December 6th. Of the current grant opportunities, the following may be of interest:

- The [Archives Arrangement & Description grant](#) funds up to \$20,000 over one year to help libraries improve access to their archival collections.
- The [Dig in! Growing Libraries with Gardens and Nature-based Learning Spaces grant](#) funds up to \$20,000 over one year “establish or expand a garden area at the library that will serve as an educational space. Projects should include a strong programming component with an emphasis on hands-on activities. Libraries should have vested partnerships at the proposal stage. Potential partnerships could include area environmental groups, gardening clubs, Board of Health, and other relevant organizations.”

*Please note that our “People’s History of Colrain Podcast” is funded by an LSTA “Go Local” grant. Note also that to be eligible for an LSTA grant, a library must have a current strategic plan and annual action plan on file. Our current strategic plan will see us through 2024, whereas we’ve not yet submitted an action plan for 2024. A draft 2024 plan follows, along with a copy of the previous (2022-2023) action plan. Trustees don’t need to vote on these, though they relate to the strategic plan, which has already been approved.

- The Open Program is a general grant opportunity to foster improved library services for specified target audiences. Libraries may apply under the Open category when other MBLC grant offerings are not a good match. The Open Program allows applicants to apply new methods to solve problems, build programs, and best carry out their library’s mission and plan. It encourages creative program development and rewards those librarians willing to engage in a higher level of effort and to take those risks. The federal LSTA program encourages such innovation and risk-taking.
- The Association for Rural & Small Libraries is offering [“Sustainable & Resilient New England Libraries” grants](#) in the amount of \$5,000-\$15,000 for projects that support sustainability and resiliency, such as “community gardens, food banks, seasonal CSA programs, community swap events, Repair Fairs, etc.” The deadline for applying for one of these grants is November 22nd.

2024 Action Plan (DRAFT)

1. We stay true to our roots, and safeguard what matters

- All visitors and staff feel welcome and safe to use our space, ask for help, and give their feedback
 - We prioritize relationship-building and the customer experience, and invite dialogue through our online presence and outreach in the community, with a minimum of six “pop-up library” events.
 - We post fresh content to our Facebook page and update the Wowbrary e-newsletter weekly, and contribute monthly to the Colrain Clarion. These posts will sometimes invite dialogue, and other times promote our services and the love of reading.
 - We will draft and post an accessibility statement to let people know what services are available here at the library. We will continue to assess our spaces and take action where necessary to be sure it is welcoming for everyone.
- Our beautiful, historic building is carefully and regularly maintained and upgraded
 - We will share and follow-up on recommendations from the Conway School of Landscape design to improve our drainage, accessibility, and safety, and create a more inviting space for outdoor programs and play.
 - The south entryway door will be refinished to ensure that it opens and closes easily and keeps water out.
- The library’s collections and programs represent diverse viewpoints and voices
 - The “Kindness Reading Project” will be revamped as “Colrain Reads,” with broader and more popular subject matter intended to attract a wider range of participants.
- Our environment is conducive to working, learning, and collaborating with others
 - In 2023-2024, we’ll refresh the meeting and reading areas on the east side of the building to make them more inviting and accessible.
- We practice evidence-based decision-making and transparent governance and accountability
 - We will leverage the new CW Mars statistics dashboard and aim to increase per-capita circulations to 10 items per resident.
 - Our website will be up to date with the latest meeting agendas, minutes, and reports. These materials will also be maintained in print in the library.
- Our team models empathy, self-care, and critical thinking
 - Each staff member will pursue and report on some professional development that relates to these themes.
- We preserve local history, and improve access to these rare materials through indexes and digitization
 - After digitizing the Annual Town Reports, we will prioritize digitizing the maps and other items that are stacked on top of the vital records cabinets, followed by these vital records themselves. All of these files will be accessible on the Digital Commonwealth at digitalcommonwealth.org.
 - The People’s History of Colrain Podcast, funded by the LSTA “Go Local” grant will be completed and accessible online by October of 2024.

2. We adapt to change, and grow our collective future

- We reach everyone, through in-person, virtual, and outreach services, and consistent marketing through a variety of platforms
 - We use our “pop up library” events to promote library events such as Summer Reading Club.

- We'll reach even more people online with free Google ads, and increase our Facebook likes from 426 to at least 511 people.
- We create opportunities for meaningful connections, especially with the most vulnerable members of our community, to inspire a love of reading, libraries, and civic engagement
 - The library will collaborate with the Council on Aging and Board of Health to assess and improve services for veterans and people who are home-bound.
 - We'll continue to build our relationship with FRCOG nurses to bring more programming like Wellness Wednesdays and the Opioid Response training that were piloted this past year.
- The library is an economic driver; we support local businesses, entrepreneurs, and students with critical infrastructure and current technologies
 - We will promote the Library of Things and our print services on our website and social media to be sure that more people know they are available.
 - Our podcasting training provides an opportunity for people in our community to learn new tech skills that they could use in school and business.
- We increase our space, funding, service hours, and programs, sustainably, and innovate to make the most of our time and limited resources
 - We will streamline our programs to build on past successes.
 - We pursue grants to augment the municipal appropriation.
- We recruit and retain trustees, staff, volunteers, partners, and Friends of the Library
 - Trustees will grow their confidence and knowledge regarding our governance and in regards to current trends in public libraries.
- We teach digital literacy and media literacy, and provide trustworthy information through value-added reference services and programs
 - Staff will review and workshop challenging interactions to be sure that we're practicing continuous process improvement.

2022-2023 Initiatives (Action Plan)

1. We stay true to our roots, and safeguard what matters

- All visitors and staff feel welcome and safe to use our space, ask for help, and give their feedback
 - Nametags with our pronouns help visitors to recognize and build relationships with everyone on our growing team.
 - Members of our team receive the training and time they need to “take ownership and follow up” in regards to questions and issues that they encounter while working at the library.
 - Symbols that are known to be offensive to indigenous and BIPOC people, or that may pose other safety risks, could be removed from our communal spaces.
- Our beautiful, historic building is carefully and regularly maintained and upgraded
 - We continue working towards plans to address drainage, security, and safety concerns, in close collaboration with the Town of Colrain.
- The library’s collections and programs represent diverse viewpoints and voices
 - The library will continue to grow the number of books featuring people from diverse backgrounds.
- Our environment is conducive to working, learning, and collaborating with others
 - In 2022-2023, we’ll take action to improve indoor spaces, including a reading nook in the children’s area and a new rug for story time
 - A fundraising committee will grow funds to be used towards a covered outdoor structure for meetings, performances, and other gatherings.
- We practice evidence-based decision-making and transparent governance and accountability
 - We will tighten the process of gathering and recording statistics, and posting meeting agendas, minutes, and reports to our website, and in print in the library.
- Our team models empathy, self-care, and critical thinking
 - The library will continue to lead community conversations through programs such as the Kindness Reading Project, and to reflect and grow through our own participation in these initiatives.
 - We do our best to leave work on time, take micro-breaks, and practice mindfulness while working.
- We preserve local history, and improve access to these rare materials through indexes and digitization
 - Our advisory committee will digitize high priority materials, and deaccession materials that aren’t appropriate for our collection to other organizations.
 - If awarded the LSTA “Go Local” grant, we will collect and record stories about Colrain history, and make these available online for folks who are not able to come to the library in person.

2. We adapt to change, and grow our collective future

- We reach everyone, through in-person, virtual, and outreach services, and consistent marketing through a variety of platforms
 - We will continue to prioritize outreach initiatives, including “pop-ups” at the Colrain transfer station.
 - We continue to create online content such as Crafts Online with Ms. Betty.

- We create opportunities for meaningful connections, especially with the most vulnerable members of our community, to inspire a love of reading, libraries, and civic engagement
 - The library will continue to work with the Colrain school's service learning coordinator to address the issues and needs they identify.
 - The library will continue to provide discarded materials to the Franklin County Jail, and participate with other libraries to explore programs for caregivers and others who are incarcerated in our community.

- The library is an economic driver; we support local businesses, entrepreneurs, and students with critical infrastructure and current technologies
 - We will hold regular hours for one-on-one technology assistance by appointment, and increase our efforts to promote this service.
 - GML will outsource technology services to Northeast IT to ensure that upgrades are done in a timely manner, and to improve the user experience for people accessing technology in the library.
 - We'll refresh the Library of Things with a digital camera, projector, Roku, and other current equipment.

- We increase our space, funding, service hours, and programs, sustainably, and innovate to make the most of our time and limited resources
 - We practice and Agile methodology to "work smarter not harder."
 - A Fundraising committee advocates for the library while growing a fund for projects to increase access, such as a covered outdoor structure.

- We recruit and retain trustees, staff, volunteers, partners, and Friends of the Library
 - We hold space for meaningful interactions within our business and governance, to be sure that we are living our library values whenever we gather or work together.
 - The Friends of the Library and Board of Trustees work with the Fundraising Committee to bolster community engagement and support for our library.

- We teach digital literacy and media literacy, and provide trustworthy information through value-added reference services and programs
 - New team members improve their search skills and confidence in teaching technology.