

Director's Report November 2023

Respectfully submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on November 8, 2023

Joys and successes:

- Welcome back, Sasha! We are also pleased to have extended an offer to Foster Ranney, of Leyden, who will join our pool of on-call Library Assistants. Foster also works on-call at the Greenfield Public Library and--fun fact!--has worked at the Simon Fraser University Library in Vancouver, BC, where Chelsea also worked at one point in time!
- We are saddened to hear about the loss of several community members, though we consider it a joy to have known them and to have been a part of their lives. Peter Laurent was a steadfast library user who borrowed a lot of books and music, and also enjoyed programs like "Walk and Movement with Kathy Steinem." He'd share a kind word whenever he stopped in (usually on his way home from work), and was really supportive of our work. Jack Cavolick was a good neighbor whose colorful garden brightens Main St., and who would even dead-head the library's annuals in the summer. In his last weeks, Jack made a point of trying to read very good novels and poems, aided by our recommendations and help from his wife, Leslie, who has steadfastly attended the Carol Purington Poetry Collective leading up to and even since Jack's death. Leslie said that this was helping her to process their own experience with death. Last but not least, our patron Cyndy Weeks' mom passed away in October. Leading up to her death, she enjoyed borrowing nature videos (especially about bears) and old musicals, and the library served as a place where people would drop-off fabric that was used to make a beautiful shroud.
- We are working with "Ms. Miller" at Colrain Central School to ensure access to all the latest and greatest award winning books and other materials to support the school curriculum and students' lifelong love of reading! This month the school asked if we could add to our collection of age-appropriate books relating to LGBTQ2S+, including both chapter and picture books. Ms. Miller now has an institutional account that she can use to place holds and to share materials with her students. This helps the school because their library budget is quite limited, and helps GML to reach more families and students who might not otherwise visit the library in person.
- Displays in the entryway windows have been pretty popular, including this month a Halloween display and then a "cozy and comforting Fall"-themed display including picture books, cook books, self help books, and more!

Building & Grounds:

- The library door is refinished and looks great! However, it is still sticking on some occasions. Aaron continues to try to resolve the situation. In the days and weeks ahead he'll be disassembling the stage and moving the lawn furniture into the basement.
- The new "OPEN" flag is here and flying again (during open hours).
- Our furnace was serviced this month, and we also filled up with oil for the winter.

Programs and services:

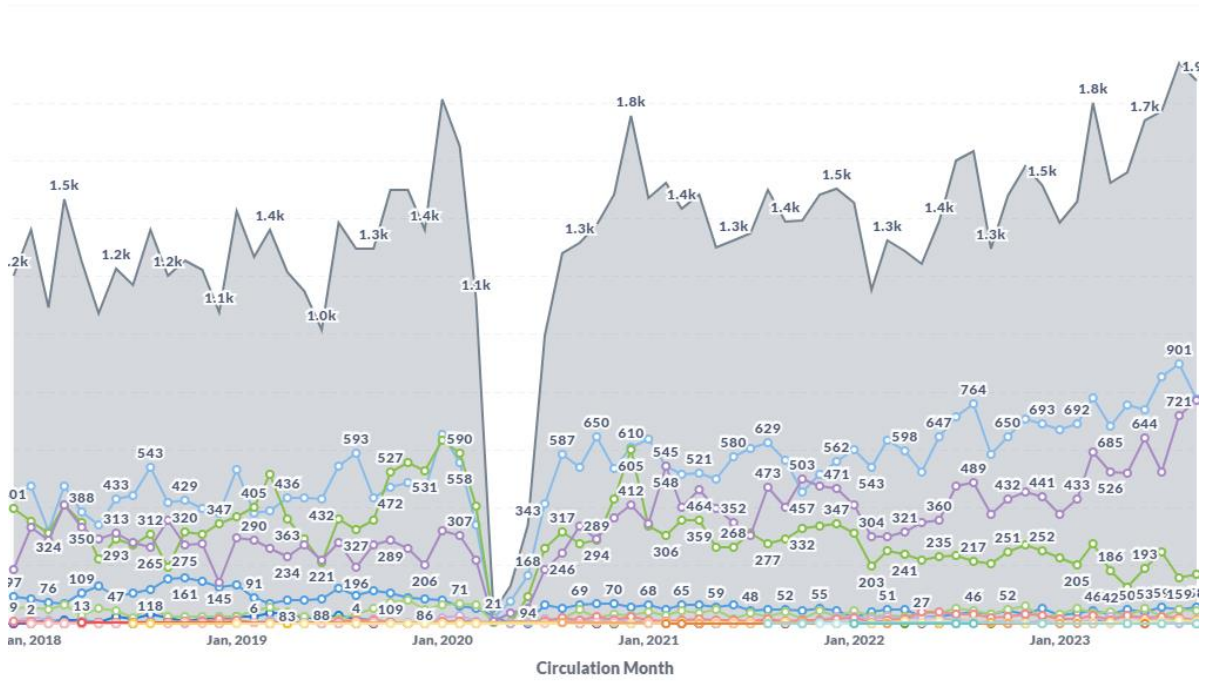
- We added Mike's Maze and Magic Wings passes to the library's collection of "museum" passes. Magic Wings has already been in popular demand, but Mike's Maze did not circulate and was only good for the 2023 season. We also added a digital radon detector and one of two new Roku streaming sticks to our collection. The Roku provides access to AMC Plus on the Roku Channel, Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV, Discovery Plus, Disney Plus, Hulu, Netflix, and Paramount Plus.
- There were 16 participants at the "Giggling Ghosts" Halloween event at Pine Hill Orchard on October 28th with Mary Jo Maichek.
- There were nine people in attendance at the November 4th meeting of the Carol Purington Poetry Collective.
- Lamby the Service Dog held hours at GML on November 4th. Lamby had two appointments, and tangentially, brought a total of seven people in to the library.
- Three people came out to meet with the Public Health Nurses in October. This winter, the nurses will be able to offer flu vaccines at the library. As of this time, they are not offering Covid or other vaccines, though they have asked us to help connect anyone who is homebound and in need of a vaccine.

Administration:

- Chelsea has been communicating with Andrea Woods and Ellen Batchelder of FRCOG about the library's intent to hire an engineer to conduct a feasibility study, and has provided them with the requisite information, and they have in turn provided a copy of their Procurement Agreement for us to sign. They are planning to attend the first meeting of the Cornerstone for Colrain Committee on November 15th at 5:00 to answer questions and give an overview as to what to expect.
- Our team met for a staff meeting on November 2nd. Our priorities were to share some information and strengthen and improve our communication and cohesiveness as a team. We discussed the challenges and threats to libraries that have been in the news, reviewed the library's updated Code of Conduct, and reviewed our work "to-do" and "in progress." We came up with the idea to improve our communication by using a shared Google doc that we will check and update each shift.
- We submitted an application for a Local Cultural Council grant on October 17th.
- Chelsea spoke with the Town Administrator and is placing a "wanted" posting on town bulletin boards and on the website to try to find snow removal for the coming winter. The Town Administrator is going to ascertain whether the requirement that this contractor have their own business insurance could be waived.
- The Town Administrator reconsidered the appropriateness of the Town Office as a site for the eight plaster busts of historical figures, and they are not able to accommodate this request after all. They said that they do not have enough space, and were not comfortable with the language in our draft acknowledgement form that stated the busts should not be sold or relocated without permission from the Library Board of Trustees. Chelsea has circled back to the Colrain Historical Society and will keep the Library Board of Trustees apprised of any further updates.
- Jesse Olsen Bay continues to make edits to our People's History of Colrain podcast, and Ellis Townsley continues their work to complete our application to digitize items from our local history collection.

- Total circulation for October was 1,881, which is about even with the previous month's circulation (1,889), and down a little bit from the summer peak, but still more than the YTD average monthly circulation (1,702). We averaged 2.6 visitors per hour open in October, which is a little less than the monthly average YTD (2.9 visitors per hour), and also a little less than the previous year's average (3.3 visitors per hour).

Here is a fun graph that shows monthly circulations since January of 2018. The light blue line is adult books, the purple line is children's books, and the green line is adult audiobooks on CD. (eBooks and eAudiobooks are not shown.)



Further Reading:

- Staff are taking in this podcast episode from the Work Life with Adam Grant, about emotional labor. This is an important consideration for anyone who works in service, especially when times are tough:
https://www.ted.com/talks/worklife_with_adam_grant_faking_your_emotions_at_work?language=en
- [NEA Finds Worrying Drop in Reading Participation \(Publisher's Weekly, November 03, 2023\)](#)