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Director's Report

Respectfully submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on June 9, 2025

Joys and successes:

- Welcome Mara Silver to our team as an on-call library assistant! You may know Mara from her work with barn swallows. She gave a talk on that subject on Saturday, May 31st. Mara's first shift was on Friday, June 6th.
- We are grateful to Drew Lopenzina, Deborah Spears Moorehead, and Dago Lydgate-Driggs for helping to celebrate William Apess Day! A portrait of William Apess painted by Deb is on display for the next month or two, on loan from Drew.



- Chelsea has been accepted to Simmons University to pursue a doctoral degree in Library and Information Science, with a full scholarship! She intends to continue and expand her research regarding library services for people impacted by incarceration, and to teach at the Simmons LIS west campus at GCC. More information about this decision and what it means for our library is available [here](#).
- We've had several great events/visits with Colrain Central School this month, including seven class visits, Literacy Night, setting up our "pop-up library" at Field Day, and a workshop with David Feinstein of the Eric Carle Museum, which was attended by 38

kids, caregivers, and teachers!



- Someone we had been providing outreach services to in Franklin County Jail for almost four years returned home, and we learned that he has already been using his local library!
- Knitting with Friends seems to be growing in popularity, and there is a regular cohort now!



Building & Grounds:

- The Cornerstone Committee met with Larocque Architecture to review their site concepts so far. A recording of this meeting is available [here](#) (password: !fk2sM@L). Stephen Larocque and Chelsea met with the Colrain Building Inspector, Shawn Kimberley, to discuss permitting and practical considerations. Please note that while it was not originally included in our requirements, Chelsea has inquired about automating the door to improve accessibility.

Programs and services:

- We rearranged the children's collection in order to accommodate our growing and very popular collection of graphic novels, and moved the fiction (middle-grade chapter books) closer to the front of the children's area, and relocated the young adult fiction to the back row of tall shelving, which also creates a more exclusive reading area for teens.
- Chelsea was one of the panelists featured at the screening of [Free for All: The Public Library](#), at Greenfield Garden Cinemas on May 19th. More than 80 people attended, and it was featured on the front page of the *Greenfield Recorder*: "[Franklin County librarians detail modern-day challenges](#)."
- There were 40 participants at William Apess Day, which we held indoors this year. Dago read the Colrain Select Board's Apess Day Proclamation, Drew spoke about how history gets made, and Deborah Spears Moorehead talked about identity and art, and the symbolism in the new portrait of Apess.
- The Carol Purington Poetry Collective met on June 6th. There were seven participants.
- Chelsea and Sarah provided outreach to D-Pod at the Franklin County Jail on June 3rd. We had several new card sign-ups. We helped one father to get picture books in time for a visit with his daughter.
- Seven people attended the May 31st program about barn swallow conservation with Mara Silver.

Administration:

- The Strategic Planning Committee met on Monday, June 2nd, and reviewed all of the data that has been collected so far, and are beginning to plan focus groups.
- Staff met on June 5th and reviewed our program planning template and evaluation. We are beginning the project to use Aspen more as our main website, as opposed to just a catalog.
- We are getting a new computer monitor for the circulation desk, and have requested also an arm that will enable us to fully pivot and share our screen with patrons.

Further reading/Good to know

- "[Court allows Trump administration to proceed with efforts to destroy Institute of Museum and Library Services as case continues](#)," ALA, June 6, 2025

"ALA is disappointed that the court did not grant our motion for preliminary injunction. The extent to which some libraries have already cancelled services and programming – and even lost staff in some cases – is evidence of the importance of IMLS. ALA will not rest until libraries in every state receive the funding promised and IMLS is back in full force to meet the information needs of all Americans," said ALA President Cindy Hohl.

- "[The 2026 Federal Budget Proposal Shuttles The Institute for Museum and Library Services](#)," in BookRiot, June 2, 2025

The 2025 fiscal year ends on September 20, 2025, which means whatever decision is made for

the 2026 budget begins October 1 of this year. If the IMLS is slashed as much as proposed, whatever happens in either lawsuit is pretty unimportant—there will be no budget to disburse grants and no budget to pay for staff. This is why we'll continue to see Trump and his administration appeal any court decisions over the next several weeks and months. If they can pass the budget, then whatever judgments are made against their actions won't matter. The IMLS will be gone by the fall of this year.

- [MBLC Maintains some Databases, Support for eBooks, and ComCat](#)

Starting on July 1, 2025, statewide research database offerings will be significantly reduced. However, the MBLC and the Massachusetts Library System (MLS), which jointly fund databases, will maintain several of the most heavily used.

- [“Appeals Court Reverses Ruling in Texas Book Ban Case,”](#) in *Publishers Weekly*, May 27, 2025

Seven of the 10 judges in the majority also joined the opinion that “a library’s collection decisions are government speech and therefore not subject to Free Speech challenge.” In their estimation, “libraries curate their collections for expressive purposes” and “their collection decisions are therefore government speech.” Notably, the government speech argument has been dismissed in other courts of appeals, including the Eighth Circuit.

In addition to reversing the preliminary injunction, the Fifth Circuit also overruled its own decision for the plaintiffs in *Campbell v. St. Tammany Parish School Board*, a 1995 First Amendment case in which a school board removed a book on voodoo from school libraries in a Louisiana parish. *Campbell*, which held that the book removal violated students’ right to receive information, “suggested students could challenge the removal of a book from public school libraries,” the court writes in the new decision, asserting that the finding “was based on a mistaken reading of precedent” and “wrongly decided” 30 years ago.

- Advocacy opportunities: September is Library Card Sign-Up Month; Banned Books Week is October 5th, and National Friends of Libraries Week is Oct. 19-25 (the 20th anniversary celebration!).