

## Director's Report January-February 2025

Respectfully submitted by Chelsea Jordan-Makely on February 7, 2025

### Joys and successes:

- We have been enjoying reading responses to the Empowered by Libraries campaign. We are collecting these in person and online. You can read those that have been uploaded so far [here](#), along with the following example:
  1. *Reading confidence*
  2. *Improved grades*
  3. *Increased family time*
  4. *Fun when bored*
  5. *Fun events for families*
  6. *Free books*
  7. *Helped to learn chess*
  8. *Make new friends*
  9. *Keeps me connected to the community*
  10. *Keeps kids busy with constructive activities*
  11. *Saves money!*
  12. *Socialization is easier*
- It was very exciting to have the Highway Department plow the front sidewalk (the one that runs parallel to the road) after the snowstorm on February 6th! This is a tricky stretch to shovel because it fills with chunks of ice and slush from the plows on the road. The Highway Department also refilled our supply of sand, and have been great at plowing the parking area before the library is scheduled to open.

### Building & Grounds:

- Green River Survey has followed up to add the wetlands markers to their survey. The time it took to complete this impacted the overall project timeline, such that we will not have an estimate for the "Cornerstone" project in time for the FY26 budget season. Nevertheless, Larocque Architecture is moving forward to create plans.
- Snow removal services have not been very reliable so far this year, and we were informed that they are not able to shovel on days when the schools have a delayed opening. The library itself opened late on two days this month, keeping in step with the school's announcements.

### Programs and services:

- The Carol Purington Poetry Collective meets February 7th.
- "Knit with Friends" led by Jan Jones, met "officially" for the first time on February 5th. This program will recur every Wednesday evening at 6:00 through March 12th at least.

- A display of books related to love and romance is on display through February 14th, when we will switch to a display honoring Black History Month.
- “Understanding Alzheimer’s and Dementia,” a presentation by Meg Ryan, a Public Health Nurse with FRCOG, on January 22nd at 5:30 p.m. was attended by four people. The information that was shared was immediately beneficial to some of the participants, and one reported that finding health information is one of the ways that the library has helped her over time.
- We visited D-Pod at the Franklin County Jail on February 3rd and spoke to 47 patrons about library services and reading, then met with the education coordinator, Jenny Abeles. We visited B-Pod on January 14th, and helped 11 patrons. Congressman McGovern’s Office contacted Chelsea about scheduling a visit inside the jail to learn more about library services, and to meet the new Sheriff, Lori Streeter, who was sworn into office on January 31st.
- We’ll be hosting another “Read to Lamby” program, March 8th from 11:00-1:00 by appointment. Reading to therapy assistance dogs can help readers of all ability levels to practice and gain confidence reading out loud.
- GML will host another movie matinee at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 15th: *The Wild Robot*. Extra copies of the book will be available at the library before that time, and we are encouraging participants to “Read the book, watch the movie!”



- Join us and help spread the word for a local history talk by Prentice Crosier, “The Griswold Legacy,” on Wednesday, March 19th at 6:00 p.m.: “A look at some Colrainers who had vision, energy, and created means and left a legacy which we still benefit from today: the Griswolds.”

#### Administration:

- We hosted the first in a series of monthly meetings to guide our strategic planning process, attended by Cheli Mennella and Dago Lydgate-Driggs of the Library Trustees, Sara Wik from

the Friends of the Library, and Val Finkel. The group began by talking about the values that will be important as they work through this process, then reviewed past strategic plans, and discussed the elements of a strategic plan. They will be reviewing the results of the 2024 Community Input Survey and providing their recommendations on the report, and have begun a “SWOT” analysis to consider the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that our library may face in the near future.

- Annual reports are due to the town on March 13th.
- Chelsea updated the “materials” line item in the proposed FY26 budget following the trustees’ special budget meeting and updates, and shared the revised budget with the town administrator.
- We renewed our subscription to our eNewsletter, Wowbrary, for another year.
- Chelsea submitted the second of three grant reports for the Expanding Information Access Grant, which funds our outreach to Franklin County Jail and the FCSO Re-Entry Center. “This program is wonderful, and the staff,” one of our patrons reported, and another said, It helped me with my vocabulary and it helps me pass my time.”
- The Library will be closed for Presidents’ Day on February 17th, and was closed on January 20th for the MLK holiday.

#### **Further reading/Good to know**

- American Alliance of Museums issues advocacy alert: [“Urgent: Protect IMLS from Indiscriminate Staffing Cuts”](#)
- A [new report from the New York Public Library](#) looks at the benefits of using public libraries. One takeaway is that libraries foster well-being. Another is that, “While surveyed patrons across all demographic segments self-reported Library impact on their well-being, the degree of impact was inversely related to neighborhood income levels.” This report has been cited by the website Literary Hub: [“It’s official: Research has found that libraries make everything better.”](#)