FALL 2019

HANCOCK’S GROWING LIBRARY
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I know you value the Portage Lake District Library and the necessary services it provides to our community. Generous past gifts have allowed the library to add children’s materials, cultural programs for all ages, and a growing world languages collection. Donations have also allowed the library to offer computers and the internet for patrons who would not otherwise have access.

This year’s annual fund campaign seeks to raise funds for the purchase of books and other materials for checkout, as well as the many library programs we host for all ages throughout the year. The library experienced a significant loss in revenue when Chassell Township officially withdrew from our district at the end of 2017. Annual fundraising campaigns like this one help ensure we are still able to support community needs through free information, public programming and a robust collection of books and other resources.

A generous, tax deductible donation from you or your family can help maintain the excellent level of service you have come to expect from the PLDL. Our goal is to raise $30,000 before the end of the fiscal year - June 31, 2020. If we are successful, the PLDL will be able to maintain an exceptional suite of programs and resources that meet community needs for another year.

Best regards,

Dillon Geshel, Library Director
Recurring Library Programs

**Baby and Me Storytime**  
*Mondays, 10:15am*  
For ages 1-18 months and a loving adult. Songs, stories, finger-plays and socializing.

**Knitting Nights**  
*Every Third Monday, 6:30pm*  
All are invited to knit, crochet, spin, or bring a hand craft and enjoy good company and conversations. All levels of skill are welcome. Meet at the back table unless otherwise noted.

**Kids Yoga**  
*Tuesdays beginning September 17, 10:15am*  
Join Fresh Coast Yoga instructor Angela Campioni for free yoga sessions for children! Registration not required, but space is limited. Bring your own yoga mat if possible.

**Downtown Houghton Farmer’s Market**  
*Tuesdays through October 1, 4-6pm*  
The market takes place in the parking lot outside the library. Stop by for fresh, local foods and special events.

**Adult Book Group**  
*Wednesday, September 11, 5:30pm*  
In September, join the book group to discuss MTU’s Reading as Inquiry selection for Summer 2019, *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone.

**Storytime for Pre-Schoolers**  
*Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:15am*  
*Beginning September 4*  
Storytime for 2-5 year olds. Join us for stories, crafts and a really good time!

**Tween Book Group**  
*Third Thursdays of the month, 6:30pm*  
For Tweens who love to read! Stop by to discuss your current read and recent reads among other book-loving pre-teens.
Since November of 2018, Boni Ashburn has been leading PLDL's effort to improve library services for residents of the Hancock School District. As the Library Manager, Boni oversees the Hancock School Public Library. Boni kindly agreed to answer a few questions about herself and her new role as librarian.

Where were you born and raised? I was born in Connecticut and lived in Ohio, Illinois and Colorado before moving here in my 20's. My grandparents were born in Baltic and Painesdale, and we vacationed up here a lot when I was a kid. When my dad sold his business in Colorado and moved up here, I followed him. I thought it would be a great place to raise my kids.
When did you first become interested in working in libraries?
It's the dream job I never seriously considered and am so lucky to have found! I got a BA in English from the University of Colorado at Boulder, but I worked for my dad for 35 years at two small businesses he owned - a rental equipment company and then a small grocery store. When he retired, I started thinking about doing something else, and when I saw the job description for this position, I kind of felt it was the perfect job for me. I'm so lucky Dillon Geshel thought so too!

What has been your favorite part of working at the Hancock Library?
Can I say the students without offending the public patrons? Because yeah, the students. They have made me feel so welcome, and useful, and seeing them enthusiastic about books and reading fills me with such a sense of purpose and accomplishment. It's been simply wonderful!

What do you like to do for fun outside of the library?
I like to read! Big surprise, right? Up until this very minute, I was an all-4-seasons-sports-watching mom to two very active teenagers who are now following their other two siblings and heading off to college. I finally see more reading time in my future... And I write children's books - I've published eight picture books so far, and hope to continue doing that forever.

What's the last book you couldn't put down?
The Important Thing About Margaret Wise Brown by Mac Barnett! It's a picture book and it's brilliant. But the last book I stayed up late into the night reading, long after I should have gone to bed, one I just couldn't stop reading, is Lovely War by Julie Berry. So, so good. *happy sigh*

| 20% increase in overall circulation |
| 67% increase in library card sign-ups |
| 1,250 new books added |
| $5,250 in grants and donations |
THE POISONWOOD BIBLE
BY BARBARA KINGSOLVER

The Poisonwood Bible follows the outwardly idyllic Price family on their mission to Belgian Congo, where their goal is to convert the native people to Christianity. Of course, this does not go as planned, and the Prices are quickly thrown into chaos and misery, struggling to even make it out alive. This rich and complex allegory provides an interesting perspective on religion, family, and colonialism. It’s not a particularly happy book, but the lack of cheeriness is definitely made up for by the meaningful and resonant story.

REBECCA
BY DAPHNE DU MAURIER

Crime, mystery, romance, a pinch of eerie Gothic imagery, and a handful of sinister intentions - these are the ingredients that make up this haunting novel. The story is mostly told through flashbacks from the unnamed narrator, a bold choice that works surprisingly well. The characters are memorable, nuanced, and shrouded in mystery until the very end. First published in 1938, Rebecca has been charming several generations of readers - its long-standing acclaim is a testament to its quality.

FIRESTARTER
BY STEPHEN KING

When couple Andy and Vicky McGee participate in an experimental drug trial, their decision comes back to haunt them after their daughter is born with pyrokinetic abilities. On the run from the government agency who administered the trial, Andy and his fire-bending daughter Charlie are left struggling to remain undetected. Is their become the government’s pawns. Firestarter is a delightful read, its fast-paced, and fraught with tension. The horror in Firestarter is subtler than some of King’s other novels, instead it’s true evil is the dark reality of human nature.

THE MOMENT OF LIFT: HOW EMPOWERING WOMEN CHANGES THE WORLD
BY MELINDA GATES

Melinda Gates gives voice to the most marginalized girls and women all over the world and argues that only by including everyone in decision making can the world become a better place. She explains, through the voices of these women, why access to contraception and family planning is the most important tool for empowering women and saving lives. The voices of the poorest of the poor are beyond sad but only these people know what it would take to make this better, one just needs to ask them, not assume what is best for them. Working with these people helped Melinda Gates find her own voice and use it to empower others.

ON EARTH WE’RE BRIEFLY
GORGEOUS
BY OCEAN VUONG

Ocean Vuong’s novel is almost dream-like, taking the reader to the Vietnam War and to life as an immigrant in the US through stories and fragments of memories. The language can be very poetic with a sharp edge. The words and stories are like pieces of broken glass that the reader is trying to put back together, feeling the hurt as doing so. This novel has many layers and touching topics like violence, war, immigrant experience, being gay, opioid problems and so on. The novel is a letter to ‘Ma’, full of raw feelings that need to be said.

MONSIEUR MEDIOCRE: ONE AMERICAN LEARNS THE HIGH ART OF BEING EVERYDAY FRENCH
BY JOHN VON SOTHEN

Von Słożen’s biography reads like a satire, pondering whether an American can become French by studying closely how dinner parties are choreographed and hosted, by making his very own French friends (other than his French wife’s friends) and by trying to learn proper French to only find out that is not how the French youth speak it. Von Słożen shares his most embarrassing moments, laughs at the French, the Americans and mostly at himself. The biography also offers interesting facts about France, the French and a multicultural life in Paris, not forgetting about the life in the countryside. There are a little too many f-words for me liking, but let’s blame the French for that.
FALL READS

Find these children's books and more in the library's online catalog at www.pldl.org
Developing partnerships with local nonprofits can lead to exciting new programs and resources for patrons. Sometimes, collaborating with these community members can help develop a good idea into a great one. This is where the story starts for Rabbit Island School, a unique, place-based arts and ecology program for area students, created by the Rabbit Island Foundation and the Portage Lake District Library.

Rabbit Island is a 91-acre forested island in Lake Superior, located four miles east of Rabbit Bay in Keweenaw County. The island has never been developed or subdivided, and a conservation easement granted in 2010 assures that its wild ecosystem will remain healthy forever. Rabbit Island hosts an artist-in-residence program that draws over 300 applications a year from around the globe. Approximately three residencies are awarded every summer.
LEARNING, ENGAGEMENT AND RECREATION ON A REMOTE ISLAND IN LAKE SUPERIOR

Last March, I reached out to the Rabbit Island Foundation director, to find out how the library might sponsor a local artist’s stay on the island. The Foundation liked the idea, but it quickly grew into a program that we knew would have a greater community impact.

Shortly thereafter, we turned our focus towards grant writing to support Rabbit Island School - a program that would allow a group of young artists to spend seven days on the island, participating in an open framework, student led expedition.

This year, we awarded five full scholarships to area High School students who spent a week on the island; reading, writing, painting, sketching, carving spoons, creating natural dyes from plants, cooking, fishing, identifying local flora and fauna, building an island community and more. They were joined by two artist mentors and myself as an administrator of the program. Bearing witness to their engagement with the landscape, their bond, and their commitment to craft is something I’ll never forget.

Still, the program is only half finished. The students will soon reconvene for a day-long workshop, preparing their art for exhibition at the library this fall. They’ll be sharing their art and experiences with family members, peers and the community at large.

Rabbit Island School is an excellent representation of the library’s goal to provide experiential learning opportunities for engagement and recreation. My hope is that we can continue the program for years to come!

Dillon Geshel, Library Director
EARLY LITERACY AT PLDL

LEARN ABOUT OUR SEASONAL AND YEAR-ROUND EARLY LITERACY PROGRAMMING!

BABY AND ME STORYTIME
Baby and Me Storytime is the Portage Lake District Library’s recurring storytime event for infants. Held every Monday at 10:15am, the program is geared towards babies ages 0-18 months and a loving adult. The events include stories, songs, finger-play, and socializing. Older siblings are also welcome.

1000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN
The 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program challenges parents and caregivers to read 1000 books to their children before they start Kindergarten. An excellent program for our Baby and Me participants to also enroll in.

STORYTIME FOR PRESCHOOLERS
During the school year, library staff host storytime events for children ages 2-5 years old every Wednesday and Thursday at 10:15am. Older and younger siblings may also attend. Join us for stories, crafts and a really good time beginning September 4 and 5!

SUMMER READING PROGRAM
Our annual summer reading program keeps children and families reading throughout the summer in an effort to defeat what educators call the Summer Slide, or the tendency to lose reading achievement gains made the year prior due to a lack of reading over summer break. This past summer, over 575 participants registered for the program.
Since July, library staff at PLDL have been adding video games to the shelves, in an effort to increase the different types of media available for checkout. Library cardholders can checkout two games at a time, and keep them for up to one week. The growing collection currently houses games for Xbox One, PS4, Wii U, and other consoles.

The collection has been in the works since May of this year, when library staff hosted a Super Smash Bros. tournament, and asked attendees to donate a gently used game in order to participate. So far, all video games for checkout have been made available thanks to donations from generous patrons.

"Video games are another form of media that our patrons are interested in, and I'm thrilled to make the collection available to them," said Library director Dillon Geshel. "As an entertainment hobby, video games are very popular, so free access to these resources is important for our patrons from a recreational perspective."

The library is accepting donations of new or gently used video games for Xbox One, Xbox 360, PS4, PS3, Wii and Wii U consoles. Please visit the library or contact library staff to learn more.
SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER SPECIAL EVENTS

SUPERIOR FAB LAB: ELECTRONICS SOLDERING
Wednesday, September 4 at 6pm
Learn proper soldering technique to assemble your own electronic clock. And you get to take everything (even the tools) home with you!

BUILDING ADULT SKILLS IN COMPUTING
Saturdays at 9am, beginning September 14
Do you need help with your digital device? Facing tablet troubles? Smartphone snafus? Do you want to learn more about what you can do with digital technology? Let the Michigan Tech team of experts help you, teach you, and inspire you!

BIBLIO BISTRO
Tuesday, September 17 at 4pm
Join PLDL Program Coordinator, Michael Stanitis and Registered Dietician Meghan Jaszczak of UPHS in the library's community room for a quick and easy cooking class using fresh produce from today's Houghton Farmers Market. There will be tasty samples to enjoy after class.

NERF BATTLE FOR PRETEENS
Friday, October 18 at 5pm
Join us for another epic nerf battle at the library! You bring a blaster, and we'll supply the darts. Pizza and refreshments provided. For ages 9-12 only.