PRISM

PORTAGE LAKE DISTRICT LIBRARY

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SPRING 2020

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Welcome to the Spring 2020 issue of PRISM! We’re excited to feature information about a lot of new library programs, the 2020 census, a strategic plan update and more. But first, I wanted to share some exciting news gleaned from the Institute of Museum and Library Services most recent annual report. Here’s to warmer days ahead:

- 100 million more people visit their libraries each year than see a move at the theater.

- Libraries are visited over 1.3 billion times a year, which is 10 times more than MLB, NFL, NBA, NHL, and Nascar combined.

- 5 million more people attend library programs than go to MLB, NFL, and NBA games combined each year.

- More than 172 million Americans have library cards. That means that more than half of the American public has a library card right now.

- Librarians answer around 250 million questions from the public each year.

- Millennials use libraries more than any other generation.

- Americans check out over 2.1 billion items from their public library every year. That’s an average of 16 items a year for every American or 32 items a year for every card holder.

-Dillon Geshel, Library Director

Contact us at:
(906) 482-4570
info@pldl.org
Or come visit on the water in downtown Houghton!
MARCH AND APRIL

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. Older siblings are always welcome!

Tai Chi
Mondays, 12pm until April 7
Tai Chi is a gentle exercise combining slow movement, deep breathing and focused intention. Registration for these events is required.

Game Night
First Mondays of the month, 6pm
All ages welcome. Come play old favorites, learn a new game, or bring one to share.

Dungeons & Dragons
Third Monday, 6pm
Join in on the adventure, or sit and listen as the story unfolds. No children under the age of 13 without adult supervision.

Knitting Nights
Third Mondays, 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.

Storytime for Pre-Schoolers
Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:15am
Storytime for 2-5 year olds. Join us for stories, crafts and a really good time. Older siblings are always welcome.

Adult Book Group
First Wednesday, 5:30pm
In March, join the library’s adult book group to discuss *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks. In April, the group will discuss *Dear Committee Members* by Julie Schumacher.

Wellness Wednesdays
First Wednesdays, 6pm
Join us for a series of programs presented by local health care practitioners on the benefits of bodywork. *The March event will be hosted on March 11.*

Movie Night
Third Thursday, 6pm
Join us for popcorn and a movie! The featured film in March is Academy Award winner *Judy.*

Tween Book Group
Third Thursdays, 6:30pm
For Tweens who love to read! Stop by to discuss your current read and recent reads among other book-loving pre-teens.

Building Adults Skills in Computing
Saturdays, 10am
BASIC teaches older adults how to use the internet to keep in touch with people, find information, and much more.

Wrangling Words
Second Saturdays, 12pm
For adults who love to write. Participants learn and practice writing different styles of fiction, 99-word flash fiction and 5-minute story-telling.
The Portage Lake District Library adopted our first-ever Strategic Plan last year. The three-year plan kicked-off on July 1, 2019. Considering input from the Houghton/Keweenaw community, the library committed to focus on improvements and innovations in the following key areas:

**Discover** - Through virtual and physical collections, PLDL will provide patrons with the materials needed for engagement, education and inspiration.

**Imagine** - PLDL will facilitate experiences that engage, educate and inspire individuals of all ages and backgrounds, and create flexible spaces that are welcoming, easy to navigate, and appropriate for a wide range of activities and community interactions.

**Connect** - PLDL will engage community partners, volunteers, and staff to maximize the library’s impact as a community resource, information center, and meeting place.

Over the last eight months, library staff have focused on 13 separate activities tied to the above mentioned areas of focus. Read on for a short summary of our progress on three of these initiatives so far.

**Utilize Outdoor Space**
One initiative we took on this year is to use the outdoor space adjacent to the library more often for public programs. So far, we’ve hosted weekly yoga events, a paddle board demo, a brail-enhanced storywalk, children’s rocket launch activity, and a voter registration drive. Looking ahead, we plan to continue to use of our outdoor waterfront space, but also bring more events offsite to public parks, beaches and more.

**Reach out to Area Students**
Our strategic plan also tasked the library with reaching out to area students and schools to develop new partnerships. This initiative has recently led to a new pilot program for students at Houghton-Portage Township Schools (HPTS), called LEAP. LEAP, or Library Education & Access Program, aims to put a free library card in the hands of every student in the district. Our pilot program has so far distributed cards to all 4th grade students at HPTS.

**Evaluate the Process for Acquiring New Materials**
Library staff have been developing and reviewing reports about the collection’s circulation to help inform our acquisitions process for new books and other materials. Library staff are also updating our book donation guidelines, to ensure we are being more strategic about items we choose to add to our collection.
Find these books and more in the library's online catalog at www.pldl.org
Where were you born and raised?
I was born and raised in Brockway, Pennsylvania, a tiny town two hours from Pittsburgh, the "Paris of Appalachia".

When did you first get interested in working in libraries?
I have always worked around books. I have worked at Books-a-Million and Borders bookstores and even spent one summer moving 10,000 volumes from one library to another at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

What has been your favorite part of working at PLDL?
I enjoy working with children. They are so curious and creative!
What do you like to do for fun outside of the library?
I read. I’ve whittled my To Be Read list on Goodreads.com down to 2,189 books. I need to up my vitamins!

What’s the last book you couldn’t put down?
I read and reread Weather by Jenny Offill. I savored the use of language and found myself reading passages out loud at midnight to my patient but sleepy husband and my probably indifferent cat.

Book Review with the Friends of PLDL

I picked up this book because the title made me laugh. I was curious as to what a well behaved woman could be defined as. If you like to read about history, architecture or women issues, I suggest you give this book a try.

The novel centers around Alva Vanderbilt (socialite, architecture enthusiast and supporter of women’s suffrage). It begins in 1874, shortly before her marriage to William Vanderbilt. His family needed her name and her family needed his money. The Vanderbilt family was one of America’s richest of the Gilded Age. Wealth that even after reading the book is hard to comprehend. One of the things that struck me about this book was that even though Alva had an incredible amount of money available to her, women of her wealth and status had very little power over their lives. No matter what was happening they were expected to be well behaved women.

The Friends of the Portage Lake District Library exist to support the library through fundraising for special projects and by holding events and programs that promote the library and its services. Recent projects have included book sales, a Library Staff Appreciation lunch, and our Give Old Books New Life fundraisers.

We welcome anyone in the community who has an interest in the library to join with us. There are many different ways to give your time and opportunities at every level of commitment, from one-time help at an event to ongoing roles on our board. For more information on how to get involved, email the Friends of the Library Board President, Maria Bergstrom at folpldl@gmail.com
WHAT IS THE CENSUS? AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The census, conducted once every 10 years, is the constitutionally-required count of every person living in the United States. It's a huge and complex endeavor, one with an enormous impact on all our communities. The 2020 Census will be the first to urge most households to respond online, but people will also have the option of responding by phone or paper questionnaire.

The decennial census form asks questions about all the people who live and sleep in a household most of the time - including babies and anyone who has no other permanent place to stay and is staying in the household - as of April 1, 2020. The census form should take about 10 minutes to complete, depending on the number of people in the household.

Census data are used to make decisions about how and where to spend more than $1.5 trillion each year for programs and services that communities rely on. Census data also drive federal funding allocations for libraries, including grants to states under the Library Services and Technology Act. The census population count is used to determine representation in Congress and the Electoral College.

Communities also use census data for planning purposes. For example, local school districts may not be able to plan effectively for changing needs if large numbers of young children are not counted, as has been the case in previous censuses. Census data help local leaders make planning decision about where libraries should be located, whether they should expand, and what kinds of services should be offered based on the characteristics of the community.

We only have one shot every 10 years to get the census right. If we don't, undercounted groups won't get the appropriate level of funding for programs needed in their neighborhoods, and local leaders and officials won't have the reliable information they need to make decisions.
Everyone counts at the library! Come to these drop-in sessions to get information on the Census, learn how to fill out the census, and have your questions answered by library staff. Laptops will be available for patrons who would like to fill out the census on site.

It is best to complete the census online between March 12 - April 20. Participation is a way to ensure that your household and community receive the resources and infrastructure they deserve and need. Census data is confidential and no other government agency will be able to see your information.

**WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT TO OUR COMMUNITY?**

- The census determines the allocation of federal grants for libraries under the Library Services Technology Act. These programs helped with the purchasing of the PLDL Book Bike, youth programs such as Rabbit Island School, and the Hancock Library’s Book Club Kits.

- Communities also use census data for planning purposes. Local school districts may not be able to plan effectively for changing needs if large numbers of young children are not counted.

- Simply put, communities that are undercounted are disadvantage economically and politically.
Secondhand: Travels in the New Global Garage Sale by Adam Minter
This book takes you into many places around the world and many different directions, yet all of them interesting and full of surprises (did you know that car seats actually do not expire?). It forces you to think about how identity is linked to possessions. You learn what happens to the items you donated in comparison to what you wish would happen to them. Secondhand business is a huge industry around the globe. The book also underlines the important of repairing items and how difficult it has become. Adam Minter's first book, Junkyard Planet is also a great read.

Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth by Sarah Smarsh
If you loved Hillbilly Elegy by J.D. Vance, you will also love this book. Sarah Smarsh writes about growing up poor in Kansas and how it has and will affect past and future generations; how the society sees you as useless trash; how your own mother shuts you out. She writes about hardworking men, penny-pinching women and why her family has not accepted government support. Smarsh teaches us that people who earn less are no less. She forces us to see the other side of the American Dream; the ones who don’t make it and if you already are labeled poor, your chances are slim. A very important book about class and how knowing that you are poor affects your identity.

An Arabian Journey: One Man’s Quest through the Heart of the Middle East
by Levison Wood.
Walk along with Wood across the Arabian Peninsula, through deserts and war zones, marshes and mountains. Wood has to trust his team back at home but also complete strangers for guidance, directions and connections. Getting visas and crossing borders give a lot of headaches and creates extra travel. Reader ponders how to understand the countries and people Wood visits and meets, or is it even possible. Wood makes us see that each country is unique and different and loaded with history. Meet Bedouins, visit Bethlehem and Petra but also feel the tension between nations. A great travel book with a lot of information and insight.
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SPRING BREAK
SPECIAL EVENTS

FEMINISTS READING FEMINISTS
Monday, March 23 at 6pm
Join us for the 11th annual Feminists Reading Feminists event hosted by the Center for Diversity & Inclusion at Michigan Tech. Help us pay homage to the contributions of diverse feminist scholars and activists who have inspired us and continue to shape our evolving world.

HARRY POTTER ESCAPE ROOM
Tuesday, March 24, at 11am
We're hosting a Harry Potter themed adventure puzzle game! Peeves has stolen the snitch and locked it up, so Madam Hooch has suspended all Quidditch practices and games until the gear is recovered. Works as a group to solve clues in order to find the snitch. Registration required.

CRICUT CRAFT: VINYL SMARTPHONE DECORATIONS
Thursday, March 26 at 11:30am
Join us for some fun making vinyl (non-permanent) decorations for your phone using the library's new Cricut machine. For ages 13 and up.

DIY SLIME
Thursday, March 26 at 2:30pm
Last year's popular spring break slime making event is back! Come dressed to make a mess. The library will provide the materials, recipe and any assistance needed. Ages 8 and up.