It’s been a busy year for PLDL. In the last year, we introduced a new early literacy program, *1000 Books Before Kindergarten*. The program encourages parents and caregivers to read up to 1,000 books with their children before they start kindergarten. To date, we’ve signed up over 150 participants for the program.

In coordination with *1000 Books*, we also launched a recurring infant storytime program, Baby and Me. Weekly, year-round Baby and Me events include songs, fingerplays, stories and socializing for babies up to 18 months old.

For the second year in a row, our annual Summer Reading Program saw record participation. 982 participants of all ages committed to reading throughout the summer, up from 876 last year.

On July 1 the Library eliminated overdue fines on material returned late, in hopes to increase access to library materials. Overdue fines can often be a barrier to access for children and families who can least afford them.

This Fall, we started a Tween Book Group for ages 10 – 14, adding to our assortment of three other age specific book clubs that meet regularly at PLDL.

In November, the Library began managing the Hancock School Public Library. The Library is now open Monday—Friday, and the new librarians are working to improve the collection and schedule programs. You can read more about our work in Hancock on page 8!

*Dillon Geshel, Library Director*
PLDL Recurring Programs

**JANUARY AND FEBRUARY**

**Baby & Me Storytime**
**Mondays, 10:15am**
For ages 1-18 months and a loving adult. Songs, stories, fingerplays and socializing. Older siblings are welcome.

**Storytime for Preschoolers**
**Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:15am**
Storytime for 2-5 year olds. Older and younger siblings may also attend. Join us for stories, crafts and a really good time.

**Read-to-Me Dogs**
**Wednesdays, 4:00pm**
Three gentle dogs will be available for children to read out loud. Bring your child’s favorite book or grab one from our shelves when it’s their turn to read.

**Young Adult Book Group**
**2nd and 4th Monday, 6:30pm**
This book group is for young adults who love to read. Stop by any regular meeting to join the group.

**Tween Book Group**
**1st and 3rd Thursday, 6:30pm**
This book group is for ages 10-13. Attendees discuss their current reads. Stop by any regular meeting to join the group.

**Adult Book Group**
**First Wednesday, 5:30pm**
This January, join the adult book group to discuss *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. New members are always welcome.

**Knitting Nights**
**Mondays, 6:30pm**
The public is invited to knit, crochet, spin, or bring a hand craft and enjoy good company and conversations. All levels of skill are welcome.
WINTER READS

Find these children’s books and more in the library’s online catalog at www.pldl.org
Give the gift of learning this holiday season with a gift certificate for membership to the Portage Lake District Library. If you have friends or family members who live outside of the library district, gifting them a membership to the library gives them access to tens of thousands of print and digital books, magazines and movies. Library membership also allows your loved ones to check-out tablets for adult and children, a 2-day pass to a premier co-working space, science kits for children and more!

A library card is the key to resources and services at PLDL. In addition to borrowing library materials, your card will let you access a computer, download digital media, search electronic databases, and much more.

Gift certificates for membership can be purchased from the front desk at the library. Options are available for family and individual memberships, as well as 1 year, 6 month, or 3 month memberships. Stop by to learn more about gift certificates for membership today.
In this issue, we’re featuring book trilogies recommended by Mia, as well as new Music recommendations from Anna. Read on below for music and book recommendations!

**The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trenton Lee Stewart**

This trilogy follows the journey of four very gifted kids who are recruited to take down a corrupt organization that is posing as a boarding school. If you’re a fan of puzzles and codes, this is the series for you! It’s chock full of them, and it’s such a satisfying feeling when one is solved and everything makes sense. The protagonists are all lovable and eccentric—you’re sure to find yourself rooting for them. Side effects of reading this series include gaining a slight understanding of Morse code and feeling really grateful that you never went to boarding school.

-Mia Brodeur, Circulation Services

**The Wildwood Chronicles by Colin Meloy**

Any fans of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, or other fantasy worlds, will find themselves falling in love with *The Wildwood Chronicles*. After Prue McKeel’s baby brother is stolen by a murder of crows and taken into the Impassable Wilderness, she must do everything in her power to get him back. However, there’s more to those woods than meets the eye—another two whole books worth, in fact! A perfect blend of reality and fiction, coupled with several adorable illustrations, and a healthy does of magical creatures, this series has something for everyone.

-Mia Brodeur, Circulation Services

**The Young Elites by Marie Lu**

In this series, Marie Lu introduces us to Adelina Amouterum, a malfeito: someone who survived the blood fever, only to be left with strange markings. Malfettos are thought of as abominations and treated as such. However, some survivors of the fever are left with more than markings—some have powers too. They are known as the Young Elites. After running away from home, Adelina meets a group of Young Elites, and from there her whole world is turned upside down. Adelina is anything but perfect, and that’s what’s so intriguing about this story; it’s told mainly from an antagonist’s perspective. Suspenseful and fast-paced, with a shocking conclusion, these books are guaranteed to leave a lasting impression.

-Mia Brodeur, Circulation Services
**That’s Christmas to Me by Pentatonix**

Do you want to get into the Holiday mood? Pentatonix is an a cappella group and the vocals are amazing. *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* is delightful. *Mary Did You Know?* is full of soul. I strongly recommend giving this album a listen.

-Anna Leppanen, Circulation Services

**Bare Feet by Caroline Jones**

Country artist Caroline Jones is a young singer and songwriter. Her new album, *Bare Feet*, has gotten a lot of attention. The music is fresh, pleasant and polished with a good vibe. Caroline Jones’ version of Van Morrison’s *Brown Eyed Girl* will take your breath away.

-Anna Leppanen, Circulation Services

**Grainsville by Steve ‘n’ Seagulls**

This Finnish band just had a concert at the Rosza Center this past fall. The band turns metal and heavy music into blue-grass with attitude, energy and a lot of skill. *I was Made For Loving You* originally by Kiss is turned into a beautiful slow version. *Ghost Town* takes you to the West. If you need a smile on your face, this album will do it!

-Anna Leppanen, Circulation Services
In November, PLDL entered into an agreement with the Hancock School District to manage the Hancock School Public Library. The library re-opened on November 1st with new hours, and our recently hired librarians got to work on a variety of projects. They began cataloging new materials, resumed InterLibrary Loan services for students and patrons, eliminated overdue fines on materials returned late, and created the library’s very first Young Adult books section.

Other recently finished projects include the addition of a Large Print section for adults, and the rearrangement of several spaces throughout the library. Materials for young children have been moved to create a new reading nook, which will be used in the coming months to host storytime events. The magazines have been moved to a more quiet space in the library, giving students and public patrons a relaxing space to sit and read.

PLDL hired two new employees to work in the Hancock library. Boni Ashburn, the new Library Manager, is a successful children’s book author with a background in business management. Our new Library Assistant, Lauren Utykanski, is a recent graduate from MSU with a degree in Professional Writing and Museum Studies. She joins us fresh off an internship with the National Park Service in Alaska, where she planned and hosted children’s programming. Make sure to stop by to meet Boni and Lauren, and learn more about what they’re up to at the Hancock School Public Library!

**Hancock Library Hours**

**Monday—Tuesday** 10am-7pm  
**Wednesday—Friday** 10am-4pm
Your generosity helps us provide programs and services to develop readers, enrich our community and support lifelong learning for thousands of children and adults each year. Here are a few examples:

**Preparing Kids for School**
- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten
- Baby and Me Storytime
- Pre-school Storytime
- Summer Reading Program

**Engaging All Ages**
- Children’s Book Group
- Tween Book Group
- Teen Book Group
- Adult Book Group

You can help support all this and more by making a gift at pldl.org/donate
Library cardholders can now checkout a 2-day pass to 101 Quincy Coworking, a shared creative workspace designed for individuals and groups who need a place to work. 101 Quincy Coworking is home to freelancers, start-up teams, established entrepreneurs, non-profits and more.

“This is a great resource for our patrons, especially those who are self-employed, as it gives them an opportunity to try out our community’s premier coworking space,” Said Library Director Dillon Geshel. “We’re excited to offer a library resource for those looking for a shared workspace or new networking opportunities.”

Library patrons can reserve a 2-day pass to the space, which will give them access to the space from 9-5pm, a floating work area, free coffee, professional networking and a great internet connection.

“Hats off to the Library for bringing this idea to the coworking space. The goal of learning and having great conversations are at the core of both organizations and we’re excited to see how this partnership helps the community,” Said Lynn Makela, Co-found at 101 Quincy Coworking. “Current 1Q1 members enjoy camaraderie and share ideas constantly. This is a great opportunity for more people to experience what it’s like to be part of a coworking space.”

Visit the Library to learn more about how to use this new benefit.
A number of online resources that the library offers for research, news, education, professional development and more saw changes made in October. All of these new resources are linked to from our website, pldl.org, and can also be found at the Michigan eLibrary website, mel.org.

Many of these resources are provided to us by the Michigan eLibrary, commonly known as MeL, which is administered by the Library of Michigan. A review team has spent the last few months gathering feedback from around the state via listening sessions and surveys to decide which resources to stop offering and which new ones to begin offering.

The most popular eResources available through MeL include AutoMate, a collection of diagrams, parts and labor estimates, and repair information for thousands of vehicles; Britannica School, a database with information on countries, animals and people for grades 3-4; and Consumer Reports, which provides clear reviews of commonly purchased products. Visit our Resources A to Z page on our website to start your research today!
Americrops Book Club for Kids  
Saturday, January 5 @ 1pm  
Saturday, February 2 @ 1pm  
Kids age 3-12 are invited to drop in for stories, crafts and fun activities. Each monthly event will have several different crafts to choose from.

Flash Fiction Writing Workshop  
Saturday, January 12 @ 12pm  
Saturday, February 9 @ 12pm  
For adults who love to write. Learn about and practice different styles of writing fiction, including flash fiction and 5-minute storytelling.

Keweenaw Garden Club  
Monday, January 21 @ 6:30pm  
Monday, February 18 @ 6:30pm  
This group was established by and for gardening enthusiasts. They have presentations on various topics sat PLDL on the third Monday of each month. Visit the library’s web calendar for updates on monthly topics.

Lake Superior Death Cafe  
Thursday, January 24 @ 6pm  
The public is invited for a presentation about death. A Death Cafe is a group directed discussion of death with no agenda, objectives or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counseling group.

Nerf Battle for Teens  
Friday, January 25 @ 5pm  
Join us for an epic Nerf Battle! Bring your own Blaster, we supply the darts. Register and sign a waiver at the library’s front desk. Registration is limited. Pizza and refreshments will be served.

Design to Sell: Realtor Tips  
Thursday, January 31 @ 6pm  
Certified professional home stager, designer, and realtor Julie Waara will present on easy and inexpensive ways to make one’s home look clean, fresh, bright and cozy in preparation for listing on the market.