

The Constant of Change

By Tim Wiles, Library Director

The more things change, the more they stay the same. As we wrap up the year – and the decade – I am struck by that French phrase. We are certainly preparing for some momentous changes here at the library, thanks to your support of our building referendum back in May. It was a pleasure for me to speak with so many community groups during the spring, including the McKownville Neighborhood Association, several local PTAs, The Republican and Democratic Committees and the Guilderland Coalition for Responsible Growth. It is key that we remain engaged with community input, ensuring that we are responsive to your needs, both now and for the future.

Our library renewal project is three-year-plus endeavor. When complete, it will provide our community, and especially our children and teens, with adequate space to thrive in our gathering place that supports lifelong learning. Since securing State Education Department approval this fall, the major milestones of our tentative timeline include soliciting project bids in Fall 2020, commencing construction in Spring 2021, and projecting the ribbon cutting of our enhanced facility for Spring 2022. Of course, the key word is “tentative”; this is just a rough schedule, subject to many variables. We will continue to keep you updated, and we greatly appreciate your patience throughout the entire process.

In addition to these major developments, it was a stellar year for GPL! I mean that quite literally, as our **Summer Reading Program theme, “A Universe of Stories,”** generated considerable interest and participation. In total, **at least 3,548 people attended 69 space-themed programs this summer!**

Other honorable mentions of 2019 include:

- Our **Feelin’ Groovy Gala** at the end of September was well-attended and generated record sponsorship participation. We are sincerely grateful to our supporters, and to the Guilderland Library Foundation for once again orchestrating this successful and enjoyable event
- We introduced a new Friday night **GPL Cabaret Night** that we’re literally jazzed about. The debut performance in October was “sold out” (it’s free!) and included appetizers and wine to accompany the smooth jazz stylings of Jeanne O’Connor. Mark your calendars – and be sure to register - for Fri. Jan. 10 at 6:30 pm, as Teresa Broadwell and her quartet color the night with relaxing and toe-tapping tunes.
- Speaking of music, our **GPL Sunday Concert Series** has been quite successful. We’ve hosted blues, rock, folk, bluegrass, jazz, medieval, big band and more, with more to come! Of particular note, The Kennedys have a loyal following, and we were thrilled to add them to the repertoire.

And there’s lots more to reflect on during the past year (some are slated for December, so check our website at: www.guilderlandlibrary.org and click on events):

- **Babies / Toddlers:** Tummy Time; Baby Yoga; Cloth Diapering; Diaper Derby; Toddler Movement & Development; Art for 1s and 2s
- **Kids:** WMHT Saturday programs; Clifford the Big Red Dog visit; Three Little Birds; Playdate Jam; STEM / STEAM programs; GPL Sprouts; GPL Adventures; Project Picture Book; Library Club; Little Lego Club; Coding; Crafts; Bee Bee the Clown visits
- **Tweens and Teens:** Teen Winter Writing Contests; Strengthening Families workshop; VolunTeens; College Essay 1:1 Workshops; What Colleges are Really Looking For

- **Seniors:** Medicare 101; Tai Chi and Qi Gong classes; Fitness for Arthritis; multiple programs by the Albany Guardian Society and Alzheimer's Association of NENY
- **Movies:** Oscar Film series; Family Film series; *Star Wars* Cantina; Magical *Frozen* Party; Marvel Movie Marathon
- **Genealogy:** Jewish family history; accessing State Archives; Dutch ancestry; NYC and Immigration
- **Food:** Cookbook Club; Pickling; Summer Harvest; Steve Barnes book discussion series; Eat to Stay Young; Chocolate!; Becoming Vegan; Autumn Honey Tasting; Coffee; Cookie Exchange
- **Crafts:** Candlemaking; Zentangle; Paint & Sip; Origami; Floral Arranging, Snowmen; Decoupage
- **Multicultural:** Bilingual Storytimes; ESOL classes; Multiracial Hair Care
- **Environment:** Climate Change; Beekeeping 101; Composting
- **Civics 101:** Better Angels; Local Government Taxation; Citizenship; Electoral College; Mock Debate; Mueller Report
- **Animals:** Llama Appreciation Day; Read to Furry Friends; Snowy Owl and Birds of Prey; Pet First Aid & Safety
- **Writing:** Poetry workshop series; Poetry in the Garden; Writing Workshop with Donna Liquori; Start Your Blog
- **Personal:** Work/Life Balance; Mindfulness; Get a Great Night's Sleep; Self Defense for Women; Plan a Trip to Disney; Retirement Planning; Cut Ties with Cable; Open Your Own Etsy Shop
- **Author Visits:** Art Shamsky – 1969 Miracle Mets; Erik Schlimmer – Albany History; John Leland – Happiness and Seniors; Mark Berger – Woodstock; Anne Easter Smith – King Richard III; ; Robert Jarvenpa – local Native American history
- **Games:** Trivia Nights, Board Game Café; Tiny Towns; Adult / Teen Spelling Bee; Dungeons & Dragons; Missing Piece Board Game Club
- **Music:** Music and the Mind; Ukulele Jam
- **Halloween:** Escape the House on the Hill; Halloween Craft Graveyard; Tween / Teen Halloween Party; Storytime & Costume Parade; *The Shining*

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it's indicative of the breadth of programming we offer. I would like to commend my staff for executing such an innovative array of excellent events! When we say there is something for everyone here at the library, we mean it! Of course, if there is something you would like to see, please let us know. We are ever mindful that though we are the caretakers, this is YOUR library.

Two more things to put on your radar for January:

- **Beanstack's Third Annual Winter Reading Challenge starts Jan. 1** - We're hoping to surpass last year's total (3,775 books) with 4,000 books read (or more!) Please log your books read online at guilderlandlibrary.beanstack.org starting January 1. We could win a prize!
- **Meet Tim Mead, new President of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum and Library, here on Mon. Jan. 6 at 10 a.m.** Mr. Mead will discuss the upcoming Hall of Fame elections, and recount working with three Angels owners including Gene Autry and Arte Moreno, as well as two of the greatest players in baseball history, Mike Trout and Albert Pujols.

May I suggest a New Year's Resolution? Make it a point to take advantage of YOUR library more often in the coming year. If you're picturing dusty books on shelves and librarians shushing you from yesteryear, you'll find that it's changed quite a bit. We offer SO much more in terms of programming and items you can check out from our Library of Things, and it's constantly evolving. Great things are happening! Yet some things remain the same, too. The library is the place to come to feel welcome, accepted and excited about the possibilities it holds. There's something here for you, guaranteed. Come find it...make this library your own.