



Cautious Optimism for the New Year

By Tim Wiles, Library Director

As we prepare to bid farewell to this challenging year, we usher in 2021 with mixed emotions. On the one hand, we are very excited to witness our building project tangibly progressing before our eyes, with anticipated completion in October, 2021. As a reminder, here's what everyone can look forward to as *Guilderland's Gathering Place*, first christened almost 30 years ago, gets a much-needed makeover to better accommodate community needs:



Additional space—6,555 square feet—including:

- more children's programming space
- dedicated teen area
- more meeting, event and study rooms
- flexible multi-use area
- coffee shop / used bookstore, outsourced as a revenue stream
- more family restrooms throughout the building

Enhanced building safety:

- installation of our first-ever sprinkler system
- reconfigured parking lot with 43 additional spaces
- relocation of drive-up book drop
- ADA compliance

This project is proceeding smoothly, and is currently on time and on budget. Outside, brisk construction activity is evident to curbside patrons (**YES—our bustling curbside service is very popular and still available during construction!**) and anyone passing by. The foundation for the new children's and teen programming areas on the east end of the building is progressing as scheduled (**shown below**). The plan is to have the exterior walls in place to allow for interior work during the cold winter months.



Building the foundation for the new children's addition



True story: Fiction now fills the Helderberg Room



The temporary wall, as viewed from the Circulation desk



Behind the temporary wall: future children's / teen areas

Inside, the major task of relocating the bulk of our collection was accomplished in November, allowing for construction work. Our Helderberg Room is now filled to the brim with rows of fiction shelves (**first photo, above**), and we are pleased that most of the collection is still accessible. If something you want is currently archived, we'll gladly request it from another local library. A temporary wall was constructed behind our former reference desk (where our fiction collection was formerly kept—**shown above**)

continued on page 3

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP



Night Owls Online

Monday, December 14 @ 7:30 pm

The next installment of our Night Owls virtual



book group centers on **American Dirt**, the buzz-worthy bestseller by Jeanine Cummins, about a Mexican woman forced to flee to the U.S. with her son as undocumented immigrants. Please register on the Events tab of our website, where you will find further instructions. For assistance placing a hold for curbside pickup, call us at **518.285.0050** or email us at: **ask.librarian@guilderlandlibrary.org**. [R]*



Holiday Card Project
December 1 - 16

Bring some joy to your neighbors! Create a holiday card and drop it off at GPL! We're partnering with Community Caregivers with a goal of collecting 200 holiday cards made by YOU! The Library will collect the cards, and Community Caregivers will distribute them to their clients.

Instructions:

- Create a card no larger than 5"x 7". Decorate however you would like. Or, re-purpose an old card. And feel free to make more than one!
- Envelopes will be provided by Community Caregivers, and they will address and mail them.
- Cards will be sent to clients of all backgrounds.
- Please feel free to write a special, uplifting message inside your card.
- You may sign the card, or you may leave it unsigned.

Drop off your card in the Holiday Card Project box at our curbside table outside the Normanskill Room during curbside hours listed below. Have Fun! **Thank you for making the time and effort to brighten someone's holiday season.**

CURRENT HOURS

Curbside Checkouts:

Mon./Wed./Fri.....10 am - 4 pm
Tues./Thurs.....1 - 7 pm
Sat.....10 am - 2 pm

Returns:

Mon - Fri.....9 am - 8 pm
Sat.....9 am - 2 pm

LITERACY



Literacy Volunteers Information Session

Saturday, December 12 @ 9:30-10:30 am

Looking for a meaningful volunteer opportunity that can change a person's life? Consider becoming a volunteer tutor with Literacy Volunteers! If you'd like to learn more about the program, register for a virtual Information Session to be held via the Zoom conferencing platform. Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County (LVORC) will soon be overseeing all literacy tutoring in both Albany and Rensselaer counties. They are recruiting volunteers to work with adult speakers of other languages and those needing basic reading skills, and will offer a training program in January. Please be sure to include an email address when you register; LVORC will send you the Zoom link for the Information Session. [R]*

JUST ADDED: HOLISTIC PAIN MANAGEMENT & THE ROLE OF CANNABIS, Wednesday, December 16 @ 12 pm. See our website's Events tab. [R]*

* **Programs will be held online**, using one of our videoconferencing platforms. You'll need a computer with a microphone and webcam, or a smartphone, to participate. **Registration is required, indicated by [R]**. Click on the Events calendar on **www.guilderlandlibrary.org** to register. We'll email you the link in advance of the program.

Amazon Smile

Did you know...you can support Guilderland Public Library while shopping on Amazon... win-win!



Simply go to **smile.amazon.com**, search for Guilderland Library Foundation and designate us as your preferred recipient, then do your shopping as usual. AmazonSmile will automatically donate 1/2 percent of eligible purchases to us. We greatly appreciate your support!

ON THE CALENDAR

Board of Trustees - Virtual Meeting

Thursday, December 17 @ 6 pm on Facebook

Public commentary to:

pc@guilderlandlibrary.org

Archives: <http://bit.ly/GPLBoardMeetings>

No Services:

Thursday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

Friday, December 25 - Christmas Day

Limited Service:

Thursday, December 31 - New Year's Eve - 10 am-2 pm



FROM LIBRARY DIRECTOR TIM WILES

continued from page 1

to sequester the work space for the children's and teen room additions. Public bathroom renovations are expected to continue until March, 2021.

**The children's / teen areas being prepped for renovation**

While we are enthusiastic about the building project we've planned since 2017 coming to fruition, we are dismayed that we cannot welcome you through our doors right now, due to the combination of pandemic protocols with severely limited usable interior space. We embarked on creating a microcosm of the stacks with Normanskill Room browsing this fall. However, it became necessary to close this operation in November, as this area was sorely needed to process the robust volume of curbside checkouts. Construction has put interior space at a premium these days, making social distancing for our hard-working staff and the construction crew onsite quite challenging.

The original plan was to reopen the main area of the library to patron browsing in December. However, since much of the interior of the library is inaccessible right now, we are severely limited in how we can reasonably maintain social distance protocols for the public. It is just not feasible to add patrons to the mix in our present confined state, unfortunately.

COVID-19 cases continue to climb, exacerbated by cold weather and holiday activity, and we are hearing about libraries statewide limiting public access once again. We're disappointed we have to be shuttered to the public for now, yet we must be realistic and continue our commitment to put safety first. Our Board of Trustees will revisit the feasibility of reopening browsing in mid-January, based on construction and coronavirus status. As always, please stay tuned!

Unfortunately, we cannot safely welcome you through our doors right now, due to the need to maintain social distance with severely limited usable interior space.

Curbside Continues

You may be wondering whether we are still providing services right now, due to construction. Rest assured—**curbside services are open!** Here's how you can check out materials from us:

- 1) Request materials via the UHLS catalog on our home page; UHLS app; or by calling (518) 285-0050.
- 2) We'll notify you when your item(s) are ready for pickup.
- 3) Park in the library's main lot during **curbside hours**:
 - **Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 10 am–4 pm**
 - **Tuesday-Thursday, 1–7 pm**
 - **Saturday, 10 am–2 pm**
- 4) Call (518) 285-0671 (Circulation) when you're ready to pick up during our current service hours (if you don't get through initially, please try again). We'll put your materials out on the table outside the Normanskill Room, to the right of the Little Free Library.
- 5) Grab your items - you're good to go!

If you need a library card, we can take care of that too! With regard to returns, all fines continue to be waived, though we certainly appreciate timeliness. We recently upped the quarantine period for all materials returned to our parking lot sheds to a full seven days. It may take ten or more days for materials to be recorded as returned, so please keep this in mind. **Our return hours are Monday-Friday, 9 am–8 pm and Saturday, 9 am–2 pm**

Of course, our **free online resources are available 24/7 at www.guilderlandlibrary.org**. If you're not sure how to get started, go to <https://guilderlandlibrary.org/e-library-landing-page/#watchtv>. You'll find instructional videos for:

- **RB Digital streaming service**—Acorn British TV and film, the Great Courses, IndieFlix, and Qello concerts
- **Hoopla**—750,000+ TV shows, movies and more, streamed to your computer, tablet, or smart phone. There's also a Hoopla app for Roku and Apple TV.

Downloading eBooks and audio books through our website is easy too. Whether you prefer your borrowed materials digitally, physically or a combination of the two—we're here to help! **For general or reference questions, contact us at 518.285.0050 or ask.librarian@guilderlandlibrary.org. For circulation or curbside questions, call 518.285.0671 or email ask.circ@guilderlandlibrary.org.** We've also **strengthened our WiFi** so it stretches nearly to Western Avenue. Feel free to access it anytime.

The general sentiment as we close out this tumultuous year is that we welcome a fresh start! For now, we must carefully stay the course of healthy protocols while we envision an enhanced facility in the near future, filled with smiling faces. That's the payoff for all we're doing now, and it will be a great day indeed when it is fully achieved.

Wishing you all a healthy, safe and enjoyable holiday season!