

Small Steps Can Lead to Giant Leaps

As I write this, “A Universe of Stories” is blasting off into the summer reading program stratosphere with a galaxy of educational and engaging activities for kids, teens and adults. We’ve got almost 1,000 ice cream cups ready to hand out, and a calendar chock full of fun space-themed events to keep everyone occupied and intellectually stimulated throughout August. Summer reading programs have been shown to help kids and teens retain curriculum learned during the previous school year, while strengthening academic performance in the year ahead. This is one of the many ways we partner with schools to augment the positive strides made in the classroom.

As you read this, we sincerely hope you take full advantage of all we have to offer, throughout the summer and beyond. Check our website for the full slate of programs! Did you know that we also have an Adult Summer Reading Club? You’re probably already reading by the pool, at the beach or in a hammock -- why not enter to win a prize as well! Cardholders age 18+ are invited to create an account on guilderlandlibrary.beanstack.org to log your reading through August 30; we can also log your progress for you. Read a book, enter the author/title on Beanstack, and earn extra points for composing a short review. Books, eBooks, audio books – everything counts! Log three books and win a FREE book, plus an entry into our Grand Prize Drawing to win a specialty gift basket on Fri. Aug. 30. Our thanks to the Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza for their continued support of this program.

The 2019 summer reading program theme coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moonwalk, a momentous achievement for humanity that demonstrated what was possible at a time when our nation was in turmoil and in need of healing. Stark images of Vietnam on our TVs were temporarily interrupted by the riveting sight of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin setting foot on the moon – a lofty goal set by President John F. Kennedy for completion for the end of the decade, which seemed almost insurmountable at the time. Though he did not live to see this goal realized, it was a poignant reminder for our fractured country of our collective potential, and it brought us together.

Legislative / Building Update

Come to think of it, that’s the mission of the library in a nutshell: to envision what’s possible, foster lifelong learning, and bring people together. When legislation supports this mission, it is all the more gratifying. In June, our state legislature restored \$20 million to the library construction fund under the capital projects budget. This funding was not included in the state’s 2019-2020 budget passed on April 1 and therefore was at risk of being eliminated. Restoration of these funds reaffirms New York’s commitment to a high-quality, robust network of public libraries as a key educational and community resource available to all. We are fortunate to have Assemblywoman Pat Fahy and Senator George Amedore as effective champions recognizing the value of libraries.

While this is a statewide initiative encompassing a network of libraries, the library renewal referendum passed by Guilderland voters in May is specific to us. Last month, I outlined a proposed timeline of our construction plans. Though we’re anxious to get started, we are also subject to the State Education Department for plan approval. We’ll do all we can on our end to keep the process moving forward, and keep you updated throughout the various phases.

5th Annual Gala - Sept. 28

We are excited to announce our fifth annual Library Gala, sponsored by the Guilderland Library Foundation, a group of volunteers who do fundraising to support programming, collections, and other improvements to the library. This year's gala theme is "Feelin' Groovy," and supporters may wish to don costumes with a 1960s or 1970s "vibe" to get into the spirit. Reserve Saturday September 28th on your calendar for night of far-out fun at the Albany Country Club. The evening promises to be a festive event with lots of great tunes from of the era spun by a local DJ. Put on those dancin' shoes and join us!

Speaking of the Gala, we could use some help. We're seeking business and individual sponsorships, at levels ranging from \$250 to \$2,000. We are grateful to following sponsors as of June 28:

- Troy Miller Construction/CM Fox Realty - \$2,000 Masterpiece Level
- Jaeger & Flynn - \$1,000 Classic Level
- The Rosenblum Companies - \$1,000 Classic Level
- Crossgates Mall - \$500 Bestseller Level
- Girvin & Ferlazzo - \$500 Bestseller Level
- The Ten Eyck Group - \$500 Bestseller Level
- Carter Conboy Law Firm - \$250 Novella Level

To add your name to this fabulous list of supporters, contact Guilderland Library Foundation President Steve Wacksman at Wacksman20@gmail.com, or contact me at the library. We greatly value these vital community partnerships and thank you for your support!

We're also looking for couples and individuals to "supersize" their support of the library by serving on the Honorary Committee, at a cost of \$100 per ticket, which includes your meal. Honorary Committee tickets are being sold now, and can be purchased by mailing a check payable to the Guilderland Library Foundation to their mailbox here at the library: 2228 Western Avenue, Guilderland, NY 12084. Lastly, we're seeking awesome items and experiences to be showcased in our live auction. Examples from past galas include weekends or weeks at summer homes or Manhattan apartments, tickets to Broadway Shows, concerts, sporting events, and the like. All donations are sincerely appreciated!

Regular tickets to the Gala, priced at \$75 each, will go on sale soon, and sell out very quickly. Please plan to join us at the Library Foundation's biggest fundraising event of the year! The most recent example of Foundation support for the library is that they've purchased two telescopes, which can be checked out by the public anytime as part of our "Library of Things."

Our new telescopes are a particularly nice tie-in to the aforementioned "A Universe of Stories" theme – which brings us back to where we started. Neil Armstrong's famous quote as he became the first person to traverse the moon's surface – "One small step for a man...one giant leap for mankind" – relates to what we do each day. Exposure to one book, program, publication, movie or person here can launch you on an unexpected and serendipitous journey to places, positions and experiences you never imagined in your grand plan. All it takes is a single step, and a willingness to explore.

We're here to support that journey of a thousand miles that begins with a single step, as described by Lao Tzu.